BUSINESS JOURNAL

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INSIDE

UTAH COUNTY

Uranium plant gets state incentives

Page 4

SEVERAL COUNTIES

Seven film productions to start this fall in Utah

Page 5

SOUTH JORDAN

New Bees' ballpark enjoys successful first season

Page 8

Industry Briefs
Pages 12-13

Business Calendar
Page 14

People on the Move
Page 15

SALT LAKE BUSINESS JOURNAL Focus

AI/Technology
F Section

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'We're going to Surf City' - right here in Utah

An artist's concept drawing shows what the new Zion Shores development will look like, with fingers of its surfing lagoon extending past the homes planned to be built. The resort community near St. George is scheduled for completion in mid-2027. (Image courtesy Zion Shores)

John Rogers
Salt Lake Business Journal

With apologies to '60s recording artists Jan and Dean, Utah will soon have its own "Surf City."

Desert Lakes LLC, a developer based in Washington County, has announced plans to build a luxury housing project in the city of Washington that it hopes will become a surfer's paradise, bringing the amenities of beach life to the desert — with everything but the '60s dream of "two girls for every boy."

The new high-end community, named Zion Shores because of its proximity to the national park on the other side of the county, will come with artificial waves, a boardwalk and waterfront homes. The 30-acre development, on property formerly known as Stucki Farms just southeast of the new Red Cliffs Utah LDS temple, is scheduled to open in mid-2027.

The major drawing card of the planned community will be a man-made nine-acre lagoon — tabbed "PerfectSwell Zion" — lined with concrete and chlorinated like a swimming pool. Two wavemakers will pump out surfable swells that will travel through lagoon fingers that pass between the project's home sites. A third wave pool at the edge of the development will offer resort-style lounging, complete with cabanas, umbrellas and a beachside boardwalk.

Developers are calling it Utah's most luxurious "surf community" — and with homes starting at $1.5 million, it's aimed squarely at deep-pocketed buyers and short-term rental investors.

"This will be a truly unique experience in the region," said Cody Larkin, CEO of Desert Lakes, the company behind the project. "We're not just building homes. We're building a lifestyle."

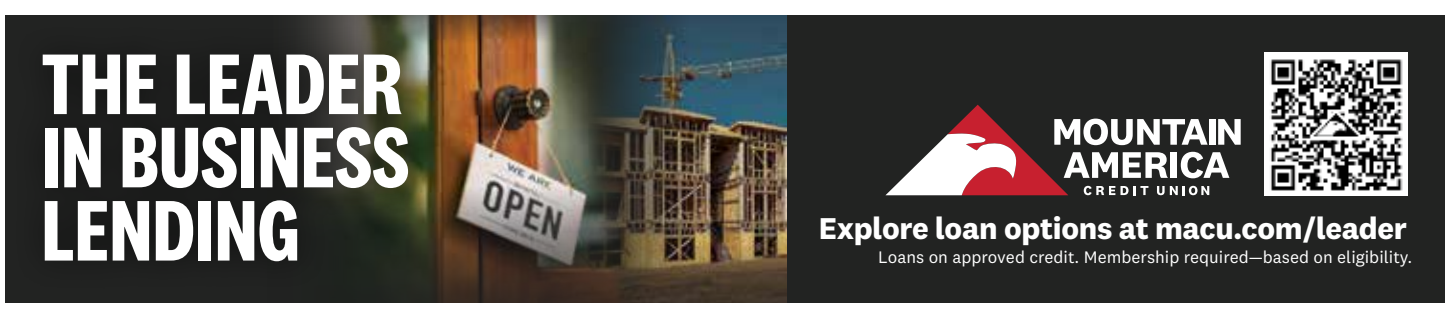
Desert Lakes LLC formed in 2019 as a partnership between Salt Lake Excavating and Immaculate Homes. The group previously built Southern Shores, a lake-based residential project in Hurricane.

Ember, a Lehi-based builder and developer that specializes in vacation home co-ownership, was recently announced as housing manager for Zion Shores. In partnership with Desert Lakes, the company will bring both co-ownership and whole-home options to the development. Whole-home ownership will be offered exclusively through Ember Real Estate Group, a licensed brokerage, while co-ownership will be provided through Ember's co-ownership platform, Ember Stays, which will be the on-site property management company at Zion Shores, covering bookings and guest services, as well as cleaning and maintenance. Fully owned homes and select co-owned homes designated as "Ember Flex" will also be made available to rent when not in use.

"At Ember, our mission is to make luxury vacation homeownership smarter, easier and more attainable," said Kurt Avarell, CEO of Ember. "Zion Shores is a groundbreaking resort community. From its PerfectSwell surf lagoon to its one-of-a-kind desert setting, it's unlike anywhere else in the world. We're thrilled to give our owners the chance to be part of it, whether through co-ownership or whole-home ownership."

"We are excited to partner with Ember," said Larkin. "Their proven track record in high-end co-ownership and property operations aligns perfectly with our vision

see SURF CITY page 2



EDCUtah: Shortfalls expected for health care, computer occupations in Utah

Utah companies may face difficulty filling positions related to health care diagnosing or treatment, computers and business operations over the next five years, according to research by the Economic Development Corporation of Utah.

In a "Research Minute" at the EDCUtah website, Michael Stachitus, EDCUtah's director of research, lists expected deficits in those occupations. The expected annual shortfall for health care diagnosing or treating practitioners (paying an average of $123,400) is 770. Computer occupations ($118,400) will be short 670 positions annually. Business operations specialists ($86,600) are projected to be 408 short.

Those shortfalls are based on current demand and market trends remaining in place and consider positions that require two-year higher education degrees.

"Health care remains a critical industry in Utah and continues to face challenges in meeting hiring demands," Stachitus wrote. "This challenge is not unique to Utah. The high demand for health care workers is a nationwide and potentially even global issue. As the median age in Utah and across the nation increases, health care needs are also expected to rise."

Among occupations in the health care category with expected deficits are registered nurses ($90,300), 274 annually; nurse practitioners ($134,500), 110; and dental hygienists ($86,300), 44.

"The gap leaves Utah with over 300 fewer registered nurses and nurse practitioners than the industry requires each year — which also means that existing nurses and hospital staff will have to shoulder the burden of increasing demand," Stachitus wrote. "Furthermore, there's not a single surplus occupation in this health care category, meaning every occupation in the group faces a hiring deficit."

Meanwhile, EDCUtah found, computer occupations remain in high demand as technology innovation and artificial intelligence continue to drive economic growth in the U.S. "The demand for software developers in Utah has remained high for over a decade and is expected to continue over the next five years," it noted.

The annual shortfall for software developers ($130,000), is expected to be 393. Next is computer user support specialists ($66,700), short by 71, and all other computer occupations ($106,000), short by 63.

The only computer-related occupation projected to have an annual surplus is computer programmer ($97,500), a surplus of five positions.

To tackle employment needs, EDCUtah calls for Utah to be "nimble and forward-thinking in its workforce development approach."

"Utah can address these occupational gaps by fostering strong alignment among workforce development initiatives, educational institutions and industry needs," EDCUtah said. "This includes investing in targeted training programs, apprenticeships and certifications that align with high-demand sectors, while encouraging businesses to partner with schools and community colleges to shape curricula around in-demand skills. Utah is addressing these demands through key programs and initiatives, including Talent Ready Utah, Custom Fit and Return Utah — three programs that connect companies to the workforce they need."

The analysis also identified occupations with expected supply surpluses in the next five years. They include preschool, elementary, middle, secondary and special education teachers ($66,300), 113 positions annually; other teachers and instructors ($43,100), 56; and entertainers and performers, sports and related workers ($67,400), 28.

Details about occupational gaps are available by emailing connect@edcutah.org.

SURF CITY

from page 1

for Zion Shores: maximizing value for homeowners while delivering extraordinary experiences for guests."

American Wave Machines (AWM) of Solana Beach, California, will build the surfing venues at Zion Shores. The park will feature the latest version of AWM's wave-making system. According to the company, Generation 6 PerfectSwell technology creates more consistent waves while using less energy. It also includes automated diagnostics and systems that control air and water temperatures. The company added that upgrades to the pneumatic system have increased the efficiency of wave generation.

Unlike most surf parks, PerfectSwell Zion will rely on brackish water — unsuitable for farming or drinking. That approach, the developers say, helps preserve fresh water and reduces overall waste.

Water use is an issue in Washington County, and some residents have voiced concerns with the planned usage. AWM also said the wave pool will also use natural materials to manage water flow, limiting the need for artificial structures.

"Water is a precious resource, especially in Southern Utah, and Zion Shores was conceived and designed with the vision of protecting that resource," said a developer's press release. "Our surf lagoons will be filled with non-potable brackish water not suitable for drinking or irrigation from privately owned on-site wells. Brackish water is much too costly to convert into culinary or irrigation quality, but with a little chemistry added, it is entirely safe for recreation."

Bruce McFarland, president of American Wave Machines, said the location offers an ideal debut for the company's latest technology.

"Gen 6 PerfectSwell is next level, and I can't think of a better location for the debut or a better partner in the U.S. Desert Lakes brings a wealth of expertise in civil construction and community infrastructure building, essential for a successful project," said McFarland.

"We have just about every outdoor activity you can think of in this high-desert playground except surfing. We're stoked to partner with AWM to change that. The team behind PerfectSwell is the real deal," Larkin said.

Construction on Zion Shores is expected to begin later this year.

A surfer rides a wave generated by the same equipment that will be installed at Zion Shores, manufactured by American Wave Machines of Solana Beach, California. (Photo courtesy American Wave Machines)

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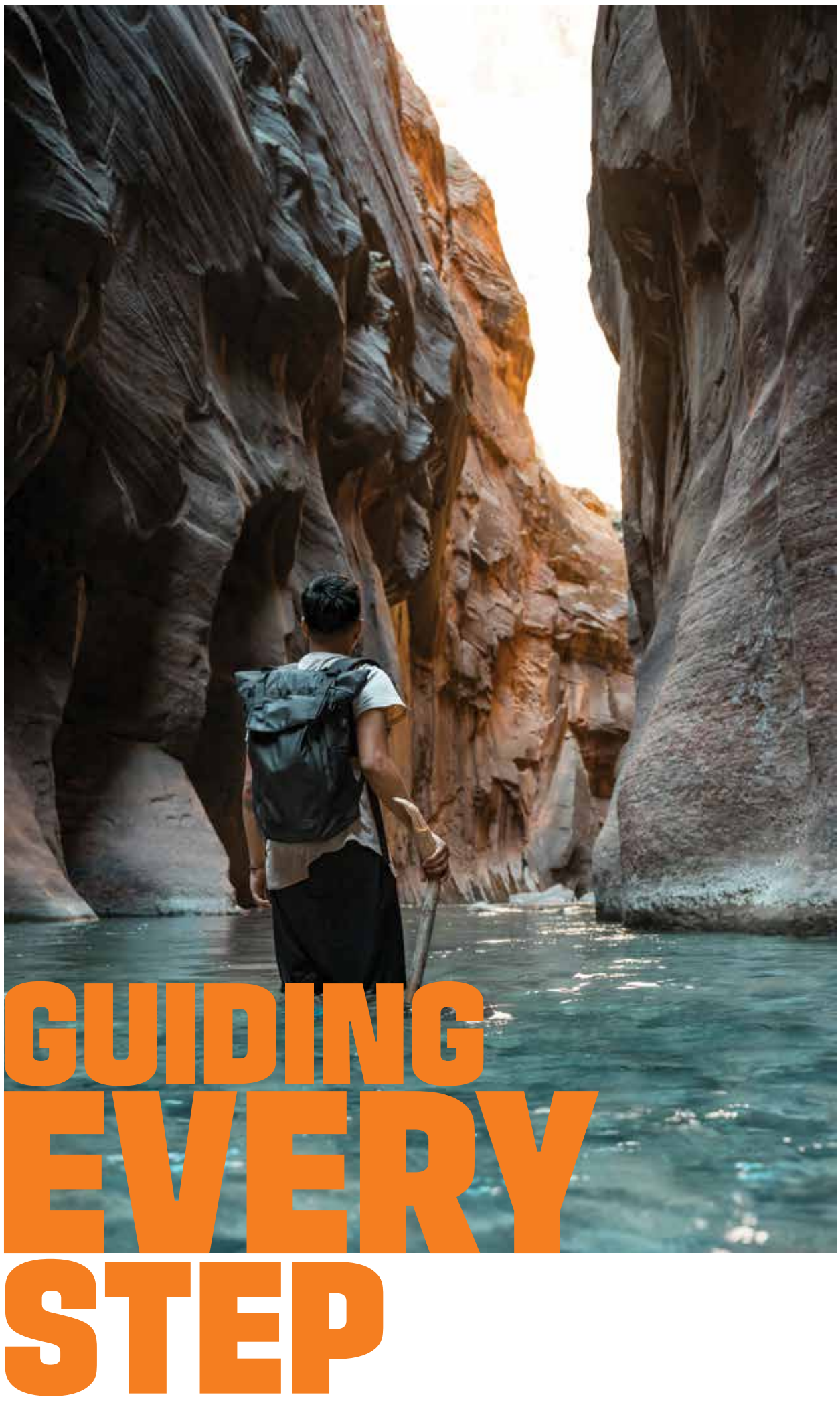

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Pair of projects related to uranium enrichment get state incentives

Brice Wallace
Salt Lake Business Journal

The Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity board has approved incentives to entice a California-based company's subsidiary to build a plant in Utah County to manufacture equipment for uranium enrichment.

Utah Energy LLC, the subsidiary of General Matter Inc., was approved for a pair of incentives at the board's October meeting last week. The first incentive is for a tax credit of up to nearly $81 million over 20 years for a $1.64 billion project that ultimately would create 200 jobs. The other incentive, a tax credit for up to $16 million over 20 years, is tied to the creation of 793 jobs in a $249 million project.

General Matter has expressed interest in manufacturing equipment at a facility at Camp Williams, and media reports in June quoted Drew DeWalt, General Matter's vice president of operations, as saying the site also would accept uranium and process it into fuel for small nuclear facilities. During the GOEO board meeting in the afternoon of Oct. 6, DeWalt said the company is focused on component manufacturing and machining and also in fuel production for energy, "both of which are persistent bottlenecks in new power generation and getting new megawatts on the grid."

During the meeting, the words "nuclear," "uranium" and "enrichment" were not spoken. Also, GOEO did not email or post on its news website any news release about the two incentives until at least the next day (after Business Journal deadlines) — unusual for the agency, which normally does so moments after incentive approvals by the board.

During the meeting, GOEO and DeWalt said the projects would be part of "Operation Gigawatt," Gov. Spencer Cox's initiative to double Utah's power production over the next 10 years.

Speaking to the GOEO board, DeWalt said the two projects "are individually, and also combined, able to help deliver on the promise of 'Operation Gigawatt' and what we're trying to accomplish in Utah." Utah is blessed with natural resources, human capital and a great work ethic and "we think we can really help deliver on that promise with energy abundance," he said.

A key pillar of the initiative is expanded energy production "and we're a big part of the supply chain for energy production and can help meet those goals in a state like Utah," DeWalt said.

The projects will "take time to ramp up, considering the constraints of constructing new facilities, hiring and growing our capacity," he said.

"From a state-level perspective, it's really about delivering cost-competitive components and fuel for future power generation, and across both projects, it's bringing hundreds of durable, high-skilled jobs. … So, at a high level, we just wanted to present that to the board and just express our excitement about the prospects of developing these in Utah in a location that we've identified."

"I know that you have worked on this project and I know you had many options, as well," said Carine Clark, GOEO board chair. "So, I just wanted to thank you and your team publicly for all the work and working through the process, but also being very diligent about making sure that all of our questions were answered as a board and that you were very careful to make sure that we understood the importance of these projects."

After the incentives were approved, Jesse Turley, chair of the board's incentives committee, told DeWalt, "We look forward to all the great work you're going to do here in Utah."

GOEO documents indicate the project creating 200 jobs would generate new total wages of $489 million over 20 years and new state tax revenue of nearly $270 million during that time. Those jobs would pay an average of $145,515. The project creating 793 jobs would result in new wages totaling nearly $1.3 billion over 20 years, with average pay of $89,945 and new state tax revenue of nearly $53.4 million.

The Military Installation Development Authority (MIDA) has secured a lease for 400 acres of state-owned land within Camp Williams for nuclear energy projects. The 120-year ground lease was approved by the Utah State Armory Board and MIDA in June.

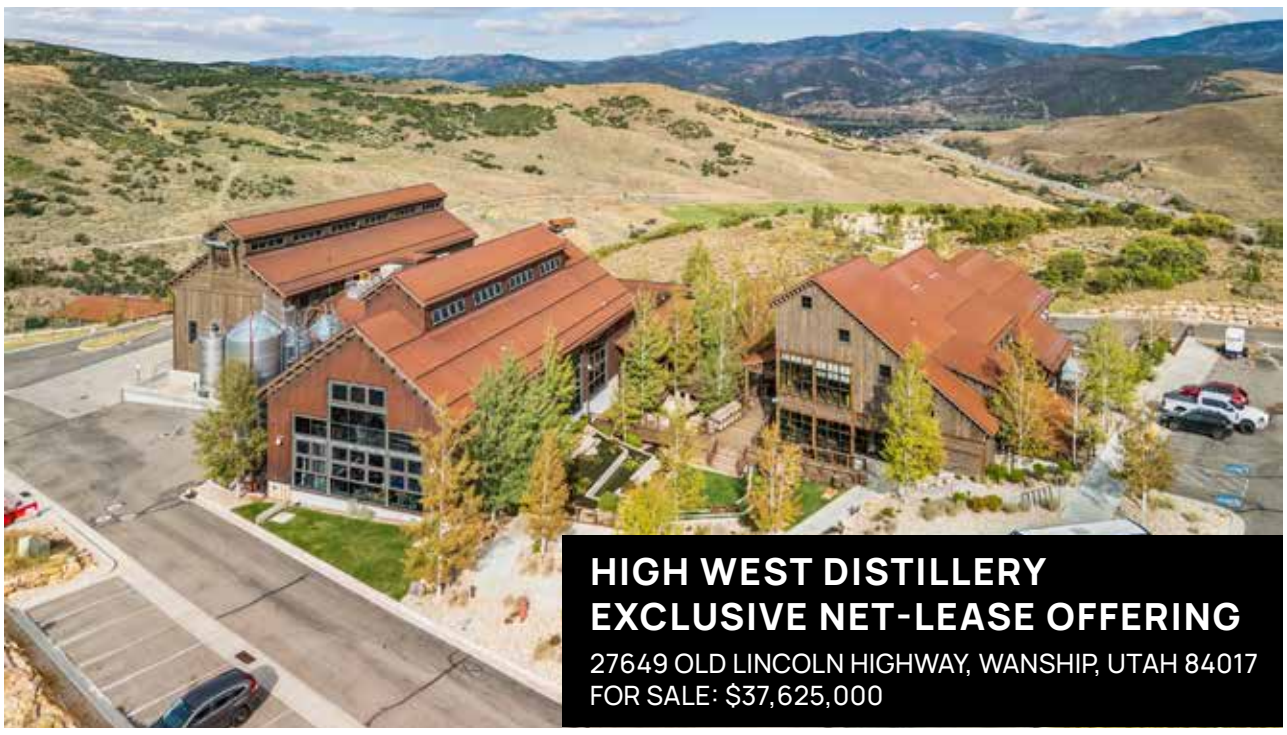
On Sept. 2, Bluffdale City Manager Bruce Kartchner posted a statement about the potential facility at Camp Williams. Although outside the city limits, the proposed location "would be directly adjacent to our community, and the city recognizes that such a project could bring economic and infrastructure benefits to the region," he wrote. The city also recognizes that such a project also could have negative impacts on our community, he wrote.

At the time, Kartchner said he and Mayor Natalie Hall had met with representatives from General Matter and said "their current focus is on the manufacturing of uranium enrichment equipment, not the enrichment of uranium itself. However, they do hope to enrich uranium in the future if they can clear all the regulatory hurdles."

Kartchner said the city would continue to evaluate the potential impact of such a project and added that "it's important to recognize that neither alarmism nor outright dismissal are productive responses to the proposal."

The GOEO board meeting last week took place in Cedar City in conjunction with the One Utah Summit.

GOEO does not provide upfront cash incentives. Each year that an incentivized company meets the obligations in its contract with GOEO, it will qualify to receive a portion of the new, additional state taxes the company paid to the state.



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Seven productions OK'd for state incentives

Brice Wallace
Salt Lake Business Journal

Cowboys, a bachelorette, monsters, aliens and puppets. Those are the focus of seven movie productions that will be shooting in Utah this fall, aided by state incentives.

The Utah Board of Tourism, at its October meeting, approved incentives totaling up to $3.7 million, based on production spending of $15.6 million and the employment of over 300 people.

The largest production is "Blood on the Promontory," expected to spend $7.3 million while shooting in Washington County. Production will take place November through June, with 55 cast and crew and 200 extras being employed.

A period western set in the Wyoming Territory in the 1870s, the production is from the team that produced Kevin Costner's western epic "Horizon: An American Saga." "Blood on the Promontory" chronicles five convicts who escape in the Wyoming Territory of the 1870s. The tourism board approved an incentive of up to $1,825,000.

The director is Greg McLane. Producers are Dane Eckerle, Glenn Kleczkowski, Mark Gillard, Evan Cooper and Jeff T. Miller.

"This is riding on the coattails of the western movement and how much everyone loves the western projects right now," Virginia Pearce, director of the Utah Film Commission, told the board.

"This is a big project. I would expect those cast and crew numbers to come up quite a bit. They (productions) always tend to underestimate who they can find in Utah and they always see those numbers go up. So, [it will] probably create plenty of jobs and lots of spend down in Southern Utah."

Taylor Frankie Paul of the Hulu series "The Secret Lives of Mormon Wives" will be the focus of Season 22 of the reality series "The Bachelorette. Three-fourths of the series will shoot at various Utah locations, with the remainder in California, Colorado and international sites. The Utah portion is projected to employ 51 cast and crew in November and December.

The series was approved for an incentive of up to $500,435, based on Utah spending of $2.5 million. Producers are Scott Teti and Jason Ehrlich. The director has not yet been announced.

"Utah offers a stunning and diverse natural backdrop that is perfect for this romantic reality series," said Lex Pascual, vice president of production incentives at Warner Bros. Discovery. "Beyond the scenery, Utah's blend of small-town charm and modern amenities offer a fresh take on romance. The state is known for its friendly communities, strong family values, and a culture that emphasizes connection — traits that align well with the emotional journey and genuine relationships that 'The Bachelorette' aims to showcase."

Independent feature "Iconoclast" was approved for an incentive of up to $875,000, based on expected Utah spending of $3.5 million. Pearce described it as an "AI/social media thriller." It will shoot in Salt Lake and Weber counties, employ 52 cast and crew and 200 extras, and see production take place through January. It will shoot entirely in Utah except for one day in Las Vegas.

The director is Gabriel Basso. Producers are Paul Bernard, Alex Lebovici and Enzo Marc.

"I love filming in Utah. I personally feel it is truly one of the best places to film," said Line Producer Steven Lee ("One Big Happy Family"). "The landscapes are amazing, giving us everything from iconic red rock deserts to lush mountain backdrops. The real treasure is the local crew. I have filmed all over the world, and the crews here are world-class, experienced and dedicated, and the local film vendors consistently go above and beyond to support productions."

Puppets are the stars of the children's series "Ladybug's Garden" from a local filmmaking team behind several Disney and Halestorm productions. The series focuses on mental health awareness and emotional resilience. It will spend nearly $1.2 million through February, with shooting taking place in and around Utah County. "Ladybug's Garden" will employ 38 cast and crew. Its incentive is for up to $298,007.

The director/producer is Brigham Taylor. Other producers are Ian Puente, Dave Hunter and Tom Goodall.

"Utah's thriving community and dedicated talent have made this the perfect place to set down roots," Puente said. "We're proud to grow our business here, alongside the state's expanding industry."

Behind the scenes of "The Chosen" Season 5 (2025)/Lionsgate Television. The show was filmed in Utah. Now, seven new productions are coming to the state. (Photo courtesy of the Utah Film Commission)

The new documentary series "Monsters & Aliens" was approved for an incentive of up to $96,000, based on expected Utah spending of $480,000. Based on the idea that aliens and monsters throughout history have been closely related, the production will shoot in Salt Lake and Summit counties and employ 40 cast and crew and 25 extras through March.

Directors are Gary Auerbach and Joel Petrie, both of whom are producers along with Jennifer Ricci.

"Excited to be working in Utah once again," Auerbach said. "Best crews, talent and film commission."

Another documentary, "Into the Wilderness," will be in production through December 2026. It will follow a group therapy program in Utah locations. Shooting is expected to take place in Washington and Wayne counties. Ninety percent of the documentary will be shot in Utah, with the rest taking place in Chicago. Portland and Dallas.

"Into the Wilderness" was approved for an incentive of up to $65,999, based on Utah spending of $329,994. It will employ 19 cast and crew.

The director is Nick Aldridge. Producers are Julian Cautherley and Marissa Lila Kongao.

"Utah was the natural choice for a film about the power of nature to heal," Cautherley said. "The state's landscapes — golden aspen forests, rugged red rock cliffs, and canyon waterways — provide both a breathtaking backdrop and a living context for the story. We were able to work with an exceptional local crew, whose deep connection to Utah's environment elevated the project while supporting the state's creative economy."

"Jesus Sees Us" is the working title for a pilot approved for an incentive of up to $60,000, based in Utah spending of $200,000. Shooting in Utah County, it will employ 33 cast and crew, with production taking place through November.

Producers are Keith Grover and Benton Crane. Directors are Kelly Vrooman and Austin Wilson.

"We're building a first-of-its-kind hybrid pipeline combining live-action, 2D, 3D and AI-enhanced animation, and we're doing it all right here in Utah," Grover said. "Our goal is to create world-class stories while training and employing local talent, helping make Utah a leader in the future of filmmaking."

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Legal Briefs

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Why your company should consider outside counsel for internal investigations

No business wants to face allegations of fraud, misconduct, or regulatory violations. But when these claims arise, a company's response can have far-reaching consequences for its legal exposure, reputation, and future operations. And while it may be tempting to rely on in-house legal teams to handle internal investigations, there are compelling reasons to engage outside counsel for these sensitive matters. Here are the top three:

1. Protecting Confidentiality and Maintaining Attorney-Client Privilege

The most important reason to engage outside counsel is to maximize the legal protections of attorney-client privilege and the attorney work-product doctrine. While in-house counsel can theoretically preserve these privileges, practical challenges often arise. In-house lawyers frequently wear two hats—advising on both day-to-day business matters and legal compliance—which can blur the line between privileged legal advice and ordinary business communications. This makes it harder to maintain confidentiality and can risk the loss of privilege.

In-house counsel may also not be perceived as sufficiently independent, especially if they have been involved in or are aware of the conduct under investigation. This can create conflicts that undermine privilege protections and the appearance of impartiality.

Outside counsel, by contrast, provides independent assurances that all communications and attorney work product are created for the purpose of providing legal advice to the company's board or committee. Outside counsel firms are adept at managing the involvement of third parties—such as forensic accountants, investigators, and data processing firms—ensuring these agents are properly walled off and that their communications remain within the scope of privilege. This is particularly important, as courts have held that statements made to private investigators or other agents employed by outside counsel are protected, while communications outside this relationship may not be.

Outside counsel can also act as a liaison with counsel for other parties relevant to the investigation, such as vendors or customers, further protecting privileged information by avoiding unnecessary involvement of management or in-house attorneys. This approach is especially important in cross-border investigations, where many jurisdictions do not recognize privilege for communications with in-house counsel, viewing them as insufficiently independent from the company.

2. Avoiding Ethical Conflicts and Promoting Credibility

Another key reason to use outside counsel is to avoid ethical conflicts and enhance the credibility of the investigation—both internally and with external stakeholders. In-house lawyers, by virtue of their roles within the company, may face real or perceived conflicts of interest, particularly if the investigation involves senior management, board members, or influential business units. Even the appearance of bias can undermine the integrity of the investigation and erode trust among employees, regulators, and the public.

Outside counsel brings independence and objectivity to the process. They are not embedded in the company's reporting lines or culture, allowing them to conduct investigations free from internal pressure or loyalties. This independence is especially important when the investigation's findings may need to be reported to the board, disclosed to regulators, or used in defense of the company.

Regulators increasingly expect companies to demonstrate not only that they conducted an investigation, but that they did so in a manner consistent with global best practices and ethical standards. The use of outside counsel is more likely to be viewed as credible and objective, which can be crucial if the company seeks cooperation credit or needs to make disclosures to authorities.

3. Mitigating Potential Penalties

A third compelling reason to engage outside counsel is their critical role in helping companies mitigate potential penalties and regulatory consequences. When allegations of misconduct arise, how a company responds can significantly influence the outcome of any subsequent enforcement action, litigation, or regulatory review. Engaging independent outside counsel signals to regulators, prosecutors, and courts that the company takes the matter seriously and is committed to a thorough, objective, and credible investigation.

Outside counsel are experienced in conducting investigations that meet the expectations of enforcement agencies such as the Department of Justice (DOJ), the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), and other global regulators. Companies that engage external counsel are better positioned to demonstrate cooperation, transparency, and a willingness to remediate any identified issues—factors that enforcement agencies routinely consider when determining whether to bring charges, the severity of penalties, or the availability of cooperation credit.

Moreover, outside counsel can help companies navigate the process of self-reporting to authorities, if appropriate, and can advise on the timing, scope, and content of any disclosures. Their independence and expertise lend credibility to the company's findings and remediation efforts, making it more likely that regulators will view the company's response as genuine and effective. This can result in reduced fines, deferred prosecution agreements, or even a declination to prosecute in certain circumstances.

In sum, internal investigations are moments of high risk and consequence for any business. Engaging outside counsel enhances the protection of privilege, ensures independence and credibility, and provides the expertise and resources needed to address what are often high-stakes matters. For companies facing allegations of wrongdoing, regulatory scrutiny, or the need to demonstrate a robust compliance culture, hiring external lawyers is not just prudent—it is a strategic investment in protecting the organization and its stakeholders.

Aaron Clark is a shareholder in Dentons' white-collar defense, government investigations, and business litigation practice groups.

Clark is a seasoned trial lawyer and former Assistant United States Attorney (in both Utah and Southern California) with nearly two decades of litigation experience, including dozens of federal jury trials. In recent years, Aaron has helped prosecute and defend some of Utah's most complex white-collar cases, and his experience as both a prosecutor and defense attorney provides a full perspective of the legal process for client companies navigating potential criminal and employment-related investigations.

Clark is licensed to practice in both Utah and California and is committed to providing top-notch legal representation across different jurisdictions. He serves on the Criminal Justice Act (CJA) Panel for the District of Utah and has mentored new attorneys through the Utah State Bar's New Lawyer Training Program, demonstrating his dedication to ensuring fair, just, and skilled representation within the legal system.

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Bees celebrate success during first season at The Ballpark at America First Square

The Salt Lake Bees are calling their inaugural season at The Ballpark at America First Square a success. The Triple-A team opened their 280,000-square-foot Ballpark in April, anchoring Downtown Daybreak, a 200-acre mixed-use development located within the 4,000-plus-acre master-planned community of Daybreak in South Jordan.

"The Salt Lake Bees had a successful inaugural season at our new ballpark, and we are excited to continue welcoming the community to attend events, concerts and more at The Ballpark at America First Square," said Michelle Smith, president of Miller Sports & Entertainment, in a company release. "Sports and entertainment at their best unite a community. We are honored to invest in places and experiences, including The Ballpark at America First Square, that build connections, inspire memories and shape the future of Utah for generations to come."

During its inaugural season, The Ballpark welcomed over 390,000 fans and attracted more than 400 season ticket holders with 1,778 tickets per game. The Ballpark hosted 75 Pacific Coast League games and more than 70 community events, concerts and corporate events, including MLB Home Run Derby X. Additionally, The Ballpark welcomed over 1,300 youth participating in baseball clinics throughout the year.

"The Ballpark at America First Square combines a best-in-class baseball experience with thoughtful district development. It anchors the surrounding neighborhood, amplifies the fan experience and functions as a true community asset in South Jordan," said Shannon Bartch, director of sports, recreation and entertainment at HOK, which designed the stadium. "Larry H. Miller Real Estate and Miller Sports & Entertainment maximized the project's potential in their first season, welcoming diverse events, creatively programming versatile public spaces and delivering a vibrant destination for events of all sizes."

The three-story ballpark celebrates the region's dramatic landscape while driving growth in the adjacent mixed-use district. The Wasatch Mountains, visible from every angle of the venue, directly influenced the design, including stainless-steel panels around The Ballpark that include a laser-etched design of the Wasatch Mountain Range. Mountain views are featured throughout, with public spaces arranged in terraces that mimic the mountainside. Materials, landscaping, fixtures and furnishings honor these regional influences while complementing the Bees' brand identity.

The recently completed center-field plaza, America First Square, connects The Ballpark to the rest of Downtown Daybreak, realizing the ownership group's vision of creating a connected, community destination with 365-day activation. America First Square hosted more than 100 concerts, community events and festivals this summer, including a performance by Ben Folds. This winter, Downtown Daybreak's Winter Village launches with a display of holiday lights at The Ballpark at America First Square and ice skating, keeping the development active year-round. A Megaplex cinema entertainment center opened over the summer and includes bowling, games, cinema and dining. In addition, Downtown Daybreak includes restaurants, retail and residential development.

The Ballpark at America First Square is part of the Downtown Daybreak development by Larry H. Miller Real Estate and Miller Sports & Entertainment, and completed its first year as home of the Salt Lake Bees. (Photo courtesy Miller Sports & Entertainment)

"The successful inaugural season at The Ballpark at America First Square is a testament to our commitment to build the places where life takes place," said Brad Holmes, president of Larry H. Miller Real Estate. "We are proud to work alongside Miller Sports & Entertainment to create a welcoming environment that not only celebrates sports but also fosters connections between people. As we look to the future, we remain dedicated to developing spaces that inspire, engage, and serve the vibrant community of South Jordan and beyond."

Future phases of Downtown Daybreak are under construction, with complete build-out estimated to take 10 to 15 years.

Crews finish Phase 1 of Delta Center rebuild in time for first Mammoth preseason games

By all accounts, fans are giving glowing reviews for the recently completed hockey-centric transformation of Delta Center in downtown Salt Lake City.

When the arena first reopened to spectators for the Utah Mammoth's 2-1 preseason win over the Los Angeles Kings earlier this month, the problems that plagued hockey enthusiasts during last year's inaugural hockey season — most notably sightlines and the ability to see the ice sheet — have been solved, making the experience much better.

The overhaul was launched last spring as fans and teams were leaving Delta Center at the end of the season's final Mammoth home game against the St. Louis Blues on April 15. The frantic effort, spearheaded by Utah Jazz, Mammoth and Delta Center owner Smith Entertainment Group (SEG), concluded in late September and marked the first phase of a multi-year transformation process. Okland Construction was the general contractor for the remodel.

The off-season, ground-up transformation of the arena began with key structural changes, including the installation of a one-of-a-kind riser seating system, custom-designed for Delta Center, which improves sightlines and adds capacity for Mammoth games in the lower bowl, while maintaining close-to-the-action seating at Jazz games. The retractable system accommodates a nearly 12-foot variance in elevation between rink and court endlines.

The bowl was also lengthened by 12 feet at each end and the event floor was raised two feet to create ideal sight lines and accommodate a new ice floor slab. This resulted in the removal of a wall on Level 3 and opening the space behind the end zone to the concourse, a temporary change that will be further adjusted in future phases of construction. Collective Phase 1 innovations resulted in full unobstructed views for every lower-bowl seat and the addition of more than 1,100 new seats, for an official full-view capacity of 12,478 seats for Mammoth games this season, with no significant change in seating capacity for Jazz games. Other major innovations completed in Phase 1 include the complete remodel of Black Desert Club located on Level 2 and the start of construction on a 450-stall parking structure that is set to be completed prior to the 2026-27 season.

In addition to the structural changes completed during the first phase, Delta Center will introduce new food and beverage offerings, the latest Utah Jazz and Utah Mammoth apparel and merchandise and other updates and innovations designed to further enhance the fan environment at all games and events, Smith Entertainment said in a release.

The new food and beverage options will be available on all levels of the arena, including new menu items from popular Utah-based restaurants, and additional beer distribution stations along the Level 3 concourse. Some of the highlights among new team-themed items include Jazz Note-shaped Banbury Cross Donuts, a Mammoth Ice Cream Sundae from Salt City Honey House, treats from Nothing Bundt Cakes and some candy options. Other new local vendors include Dangerous Pretzels, Proper Burger, Totally Nuts and San Diablo Churros. The popular existing Mountain Menu will remain available at concession stands on concourse Level 3 and Level 5.

Crews lay piping that carries the solution that freezes the ice on the arena floor during the recent remodel of Delta Center. The changes, completed since the end of the 2024-25 hockey season, increased the hockey seating capacity of the venue and eliminated restricted sightlines. (Photo courtesy Okland Construction)

In May, SEG announced a partnership with Fanatics, which runs the teams' retail business, both e-commerce and in-venue. This season, the Jazz and Mammoth will both introduce new official team uniforms, which fans will be able to purchase at the Team Store inside Delta Center.

SEG also said that to ensure guest safety and enjoyment inside the arena, signs and posters are no longer permitted inside Delta Center for Jazz games, Mammoth games, concerts and events, unless otherwise specified by a specific concert or event promoter. Complete details on additional arena policies are available at the Delta Center website.

A new ride-share zone has also been implemented outside the Delta Center plaza, at the northwest corner of John Stockton Drive and 100 South, making it easier for fans to attend a game or event. In partnership with Lyft, the designated location for ride-share dropoff and pickup zones will create a streamlined experience for passengers who use these services to attend a game or event.

The Delta Center was built as a modern replacement for the aging Salt Palace in 1991, primarily to house the Utah Jazz and the Salt Lake Golden Eagles. Spearheaded and financed by then-Jazz owner Larry H. Miller, construction finished in a record 15 months, creating an arena that hosted the 2002 Olympic Winter Games' figure skating and short track speed skating events. The arena has been renamed several times, becoming EnergySolutions Arena and then Vivint Smart Home Arena before reverting to its original Delta Center name on July 1, 2023.

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Utah institutions unite to launch Gail Miller Utah Impact Fund

The philanthropy arms of three Utah institutions have partnered to launch the Gail Miller Utah Impact Fund — a first-of-its-kind initiative designed to create meaningful impact and expand opportunity across the state.

The Larry H. & Gail Miller Family Foundation, Zions Bank and Intermountain Health said the impact fund "was created in honor of Gail Miller's legacy of driving meaningful change and uplifting communities across Utah." The fund will blend philanthropic dollars with investment capital to launch projects that may not otherwise receive funding. It will be "powered by partnerships, rooted in place-based giving and focused on initiatives that build for future generations — not just for today."

"At Intermountain Health, we believe thriving communities are built through collaboration, trust and targeted investment," said Sue Robel, Intermountain Health region president. "We're proud to join forces with organizations who share a deep commitment to strengthening Utah's communities."

Initial funding of $25 million in philanthropic seed money will be provided by the Miller Family Foundation. The foundation's first $5 million of the $25 million will be given directly to Salt Lake City to support the priorities and projects identified in the initial phase of the Ballpark Next project and the Ballpark Neighborhood.

The fund aims to secure $50 million in philanthropic funding which helps unlock and de-risk an additional $150 million to $200 million in traditional investment capital. By combining these two types of capital, the fund can support projects that might not traditionally receive funding through philanthropy or investment capital alone. The new fund's leaders encourage other philanthropic donors, investors, entrepreneurs and community leaders to join the effort in order to generate opportunities across Utah to create impact for future generations.

Taking inspiration from innovative efforts like the GroundBreak Coalition in Minneapolis and Benefit Chicago, this fund will take a place-based approach to investing — but unlike those models, it will be the first of its kind to deploy capital statewide. From providing matching grants that expand volunteer service programs to helping public landowners engage in strategic asset planning, the fund is designed to spark change in communities where the potential for greatness already exists.

"Combining philanthropic resources with investment capital allows us to approach community challenges with both heart and strategy," said Paul Burdiss, president and CEO of Zions Bank. "This kind of blended funding model gives promising ideas the momentum they need to scale, and ensures that the impact is both meaningful and enduring."

The fund is open to a range of entities — including counties, municipalities, universities and nonpartisan inter-local government cooperatives — that are working to improve quality of life and strengthen the people they serve, a statement from the new fund said. Priority will be given to organizations supporting rural areas, marginalized populations and efforts to reduce significant disparities in health equity.

"This fund is about helping communities realize their own potential," said Don Stirling, executive director of the Miller Family Foundation. "With philanthropic dollars attracting traditional investment capital — guided by local vision and leadership — we can cultivate change and thriving communities that will endure for generations. We invite others — businesses, organizations and individuals — to join us in enhancing neighborhoods and strengthening individuals across Utah to build a stronger, brighter future."

Businesses can find information about joining the fund's efforts at https://www.lhm.com/impact-fund/.

Qualtrics to acquire experience management company Press Ganey Forsta in $6.75 billion deal

Provo-based software company Qualtrics has agreed to acquire Press Ganey Forsta, a major provider of experience measurement and data analytics, in a transaction worth $6.75 billion.

Based in South Bend, Indiana, Press Ganey Forsta is a data and benchmarking platform in customer experience, patient experience, employee experience and market research for the health care industry. Press Ganey Forsta was founded by a combination of several firms in the data and analytics field.

Press Ganey was founded in 1985 by Irwin Press and Rod Ganey, while Forsta was formed in 2021 through the merger of Confirmit and FocusVision, which Press Ganey then acquired in April 2022.

The company employs more than 3,000 and serves 41,000 customers through a dozen North American locations and at offices in Europe, Asia and Australia.

Qualtrics has thousands of customers worldwide, providing them with customer and employee experience data designed to build human connections, increase customer loyalty, boost employee engagement and drive business success. Founded in Provo in 2002 by Scott M. Smith, Ryan Smith, Jared Smith and Stuart Orgill, Qualtrics International has offices across North America, South America, Europe, the Middle East and Asia, with co-headquarters in Seattle. Qualtrics has over 6,000 employees.

In November 2018, German software firm SAP announced its intent to acquire Qualtrics for $8 billion. The acquisition was completed in January 2019, with Qualtrics operating as a subsidiary of SAP. In January 2021, SAP spun Qualtrics out as a standalone public company, listing it on the Nasdaq. SAP retained a majority ownership stake following the IPO.

In March 2023, it became a private company again. An investor group led by the private equity firm Silver Lake, along with CPP Investments — the investment arm of the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board — agreed to take Qualtrics private in a $12.5 billion transaction. The acquisition was completed in June 2023.

"With their shared vision to improve the human experience, the combination of Qualtrics and Press Ganey Forsta represents a key milestone as companies adopt AI to interact with and address the needs of their customers and employees," Qualtrics said in its announcement of the acquisition. "Together, Qualtrics and Press Ganey Forsta will enable organizations to deliver better and more attuned products, services and experiences powered by a deep understanding of the customers, employees and industries they serve."

Under the terms of the agreement, Qualtrics will acquire Press Ganey Forsta for $6.75 billion, payable in a combination of cash and privately held Qualtrics equity. The transaction is subject to receipt of required regulatory approvals and satisfaction or waiver of other customary closing conditions and is expected to close when the conditions are met — likely late this year. Until then, the two companies will continue to operate independently, Qualtrics said.

"Bringing Qualtrics and Press Ganey Forsta together will accelerate the adoption of AI and create the most comprehensive platform for improving the human experience. Combining Qualtrics' AI platform with Press Ganey Forsta's trusted analytics and deep expertise creates an opportunity to deliver exceptional value and measurable outcomes for our customers," said Zig Serafin, CEO of Qualtrics. "There's no more important proving ground for experience management than health care, where better experiences for patients and employees directly impact better outcomes and quality of care. We're excited to welcome Press Ganey Forsta to Qualtrics and deliver this future together."

"AI is rapidly transforming every industry and organizations need proven, innovative solutions grounded in deep expertise to move from insight to impact faster. This investment ignites our ability to deliver," said Patrick T. Ryan, chairman and CEO of Press Ganey Forsta. "By bringing together two leading companies, we're accelerating critical advancements that will elevate the human experience, driving greater safety, trust and value for millions of patients, consumers and employees worldwide. It's a remarkable opportunity, and we're energized by the journey ahead with Qualtrics and our clients."

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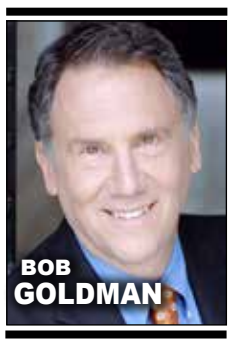
WORK DAZE

Buttering up your popcorn brain



You don't have to tell me — you're a busy person.

Forget work. You've got reels to watch and TikToks to write and Reddits to read and Substacks to stack. You've got news flashes on sales to get excited about and a world of sports scores to get mad about and, of course, Taylor tidbits to track on Insta, Reddit, Page Six and PopSugar. Not to mention vacations to plan and recipes to save and medical test results to decode and, hey, this column is not going to read itself.

The video player is currently playing an ad. You can skip the ad in three seconds with a mouse or keyboard.

And the amazing thing is, you do it all. You and your smartypants phone somehow manage to navigate the ever-expanding universe of information. Nothing slips between the cracks, except your brain.

Oh, your poor brain! It's overworked and overstressed. Unfortunately, medical science can't cure your aching brain, but it can do the next best thing. It can name it.

Introducing "Popcorn Brain."

The name was coined by researcher David Levy in 2011 to describe "an overload of information that can decrease your productivity levels, negatively affect your memory and increase feelings of stress."

Or so I learned in "Struggling to Focus? It Could be 'Popcorn Brain,'" a recent Renee Onque post on CNBC.com.

The focus of reporter Onque's piece is a new book by Harvard physician Dr. Aditi Nerurkar, *The 5 Resets: Rewire Your Brain and Body for Less Stress and More Resilience*.

According to the good doctor, "our brains get habituated to this constant streaming of information, making it harder for us to look away and disconnect from our devices, slow down our thoughts and live fully offline."

If this sounds like you, the following nonsense will sound like me. I'd feel guilty about giving you my bad takes on Nerurkar's good advice, but I know you're too popcorn-brained to notice.

No. 1: Limit Yourself to 20 Minutes of Scrolling.

This won't be easy. Just when you're deep in critical searches to find photos of Cardi B's baby and research the dating resume of Jennifer Aniston's new boyfriend, you've lost all sense of time. Since you use the timer feature on your phone, you'll need to buy a second phone to time your first phone, since you can't stop doomscrolling when you have a phone in your hand. You'll then need a third phone to time your second phone. A better choice would be to move a grandfather clock into your cubicle. As its majestic chimes echo through the office on the quarter-hour, 24 hours a day, you'll receive the attention you've been seeking, guaranteed.

No. 2: Turn Off Push Notifications and Pop-Ups.

The average smartphone user gets about 46 push notifications a day. The endless beeps, buzzes, chirps and cheeps can be distracting, though no one can deny it is essential to know the instant the new Kim Kardashian/Dr. Scholl Foot Pad collab drops. To rid yourself of these disruptive brain burps, simply stuff your ears with noise-canceling marshmallows. They're a lot cheaper than earbuds and at the end of the day, make a tasty snack.

No. 3: Keep Your Smartphone at least 10 Feet from Your Desk.

No need to measure. Walk to the HR department and leave your phone on the desk of a slumbering HR professional. No more worries about spending too much time on your phone. If it's in HR, you'll never go back to get it.

No. 4: Don't Put Your Phone on the Nightstand When Going to Sleep.

Leaving your phone outside the bedroom door seems like an easy way to turn off your popcorn brain, but when you find yourself in your PJs, sleep-scrolling in the bathtub, stronger remedies must be considered. Before you go to bed, simply FedEx your phone to your own address. Overnight delivery will take your phone out of your hands at night, so you can sleep, and return to it the next morning, when you're fresh and ready to doomscroll again.

If you're like most people today, born with a golden smartphone in your ear, it will not be easy to cure yourself of popcorn brain. That's why I endorse a different state of mind, my state of mind. I call it "Oatmeal Brain."

With Oatmeal Brain, your mind turns to a warm, lumpy mush. Reels roll on. Substacks stack up. You don't care. You have zero curiosity, thus zero need to scroll. Having an Oatmeal Brain is no way to live, you may say but let me tell you — it's a great way to get through the workday.

Bob Goldman was an advertising executive at a Fortune 500 company. He offers a virtual shoulder to cry on at bob@bgplanning.com.

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Utah consumer sentiment steady in September, nationally not so much

Utah consumers expressed little change in their attitude about economic conditions in September, but nationally, things aren't quite as rosy.

Utah's consumer sentiment rose a statistically insignificant 0.3 percent in September, according to the Zions Bank Consumer Sentiment Survey, conducted by the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute at the University of Utah. This increase — from 79.9 in August to 80.1 in September — is within the survey's margin of error.

However, a similar survey conducted by the University of Michigan reported that sentiment fell 5.3 during September among Americans as a whole.

"Components of Utah's consumer sentiment index changed little between August and September," said Phil Dean, chief economist at the Gardner Institute. "However, expectations of the national economy over the next five years soured, declining from August to September."

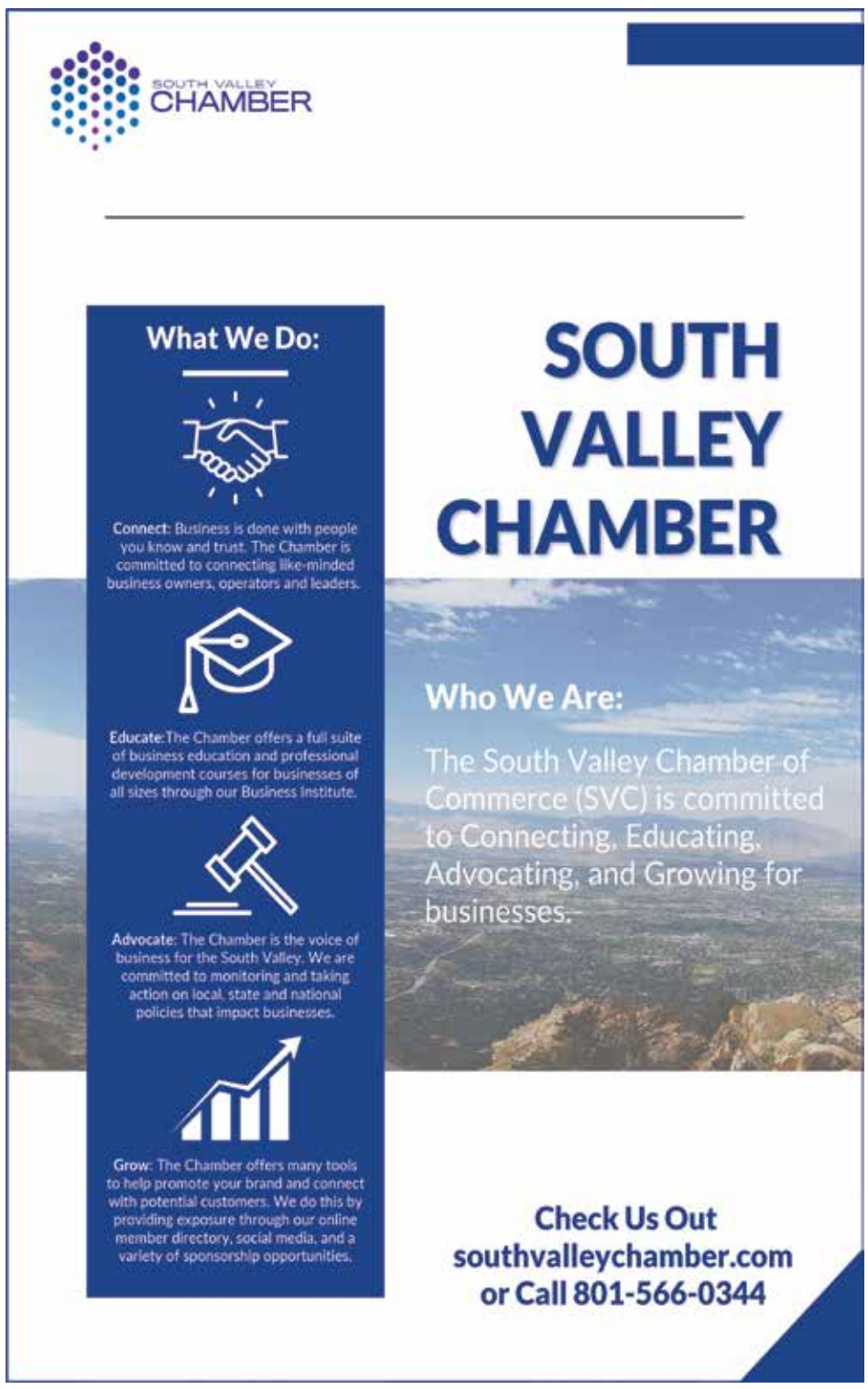
National consumer sentiment fell for a second straight month, hitting its lowest level since May, amid increasing economic concerns. The Michigan Consumer Sentiment Index was down 3.1 points, or 5.3 percent, to 55.1 in September. The latest reading was lower than the forecast of 55.4. Consumer sentiment has fallen by 21.4 percent (15 points) compared to a year ago.

"Consumers continue to express frustration over the persistence of high prices, with 44 percent spontaneously mentioning that high prices are eroding their personal finances, the highest reading in a year," said Joanne Hsu, director of surveys at the University of Michigan. "Interviews this month highlight the fact that consumers feel pressure both from the prospect of higher inflation as well as the risk of weaker labor markets."

To put the national report in historical context, consumer sentiment is currently 34.6 percent below its average reading of 84.3, based on data dating back to 1978.

The Utah consumer confidence survey uses key questions from the University of Michigan's Survey of Consumers. These questions measure residents' views of the present economic situation and their expectations for the economy in the future. Data gathered from the key questions are used to create the consumer confidence index for Utah. Demographic questions are included in the questionnaire to allow for additional analysis of the data and to assess the representativeness of the sample.

The full results of the monthly Utah Consumer Sentiment survey can be accessed through the Gardner Institute website at gardner.utah.edu.



INDUSTRY BRIEFS

Company news information may be sent to brice.w@thecityjournals.com.

CONTESTS

• Proposals are being accepted until Oct. 26 by the **University of Utah** for the **High Tech West 2026 Pitch Competition**. Taking place in February and building on what was previously known as the Remote & Austere Conditions (RAC) Grand Challenge, High Tech West is an expanded, multi-day pitch event that unites research experts, industry partners and legislative representatives to explore groundbreaking technologies and solutions to the nation's pressing challenges. High Tech West is seeking pitch proposals that align with distinct focus areas: one for aerospace and national security and the other for biotech and medicine supporting austere operations. Winning teams will be funded for the 2027 academic school year, with two to three awards expected per focus area being funded. Awards are up to $250,000 and are to be used to cover only direct costs. Details are at https://www.research.utah.edu/funding/high-tech-west/.

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

• **Utah** is ranked ninth-lowest among states for the **most new manufactured homes** in 2024, according to a report by **Construction Coverage**. Utah shipped 276 manufactured homes last year and issued 17,674 permits for single-family site-built homes. In 2024, 1.5 percent of all new single-family houses built in Utah were manufactured homes, compared to 9.5 percent nationally. Manufactured homes in Utah sold at an average price of $144,700, versus the median $538,936 for all single-family homes in 2024. The highest number of new manufactured homes were in Texas, at 18,345. The lowest was in Hawaii, at zero. Details are at https://constructioncoverage.com/research/states-investing-most-in-manufactured-housing.

• **Sugar House** in Salt Lake City is the state's **"top spot for eating well on a budget,"** according to a survey of foodies by loan provider **Advance America**. Sugar House is No. 49 nationally. Other Utah locations on the list are No. 91 **Downtown Provo** and No. 92 **Downtown St. George**. The top location nationally is Athens, Georgia. Details are at https://www.advanceamerica.net/money-saving-tips/budgeting-tips/best-neighborhoods-to-eat-well-on-budget.

• The **"Giant License Plate Spider"** in St. George is the No. 5 **"ugliest public art piece"** in the U.S., according to a survey by art printing provider **Rivers Art**. Also on the list from Utah are No. 17 **"Joseph Smith Sphinx"** in Salt Lake City, No. 26 **"Tree of Utah"** in Bonneville Salt Flats, and No. 51 **"Out of the Blue"** in Salt Lake City. The top-ranked piece nationally is the Boll Weevil Monument in Enterprise, Alabama. Details are at https://www.riverswallart.com/blogs/art-surveys/ugliest-public-art.

• **Mirror Lake Highway** is the top-ranked **"romantic fall drive"** in Utah, according to a survey of couples by **Gunther Volkswagen Coconut Creek**. Coming in second is **Scenic Byway 12** (Boulder to Torrey) and in third is **Alpine Loop Scenic Byway**. Details are at https://www.gunthervw.net/romantic-routes.htm.

• **Salt Lake City** is ranked No. 65 nationally for having **the worst drivers**, according to **American River Wellness** and based on a survey of truckers. **West Valley City** drivers are ranked No. 210. Respondents weighed in on behaviors like tailgating in blind spots, last-second cutins, and failing to leave enough space for trucks. Truckers criticized Salt Lake City for its sprawling freeway network and aggressive driving culture. They said motorists often weave across multiple lanes at high speeds, cut directly in front of semis, and slam on the brakes in heavy congestion. Others pointed to blind-spot tailgating as a daily hazard. In West Valley City, truckers said, locals are quick to weave through suburban freeways and slow to give semis any room. They complained about motorists cutting across lanes without signaling, braking hard in front of rigs, and tailgating dangerously in blind spots. The worst-drivers list is topped by New York City. Details are at https://americanriverwellnessrecovery.com/worst-drivers-survey/.

EXPANSIONS

• **Image Studios**, a Salt Lake City-based franchisor of salon suites, has announced planned expansions in Atlanta, Houston, St. Louis and Tampa. Image already has over 120 locations open across 27 states and over 200 in development.

HEALTH CARE

• **Seek Labs**, a Salt Lake City-based biotech company, has joined two federally supported innovation networks: the **Investor Catalyst Hub**, a regional hub of ARPANET-H launched by the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H), and the **Rapid Response Partnership Vehicle** (RRPV), which supports the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) in accelerating medical countermeasure development. Seek Labs brings its CRISPR-based therapeutics, equipment-free molecular diagnostics, and AI-powered pathogen mapping to applicable opportunities within those networks. Based in the Greater Boston area and managed by VentureWell, the Investor Catalyst Hub seeks to accelerate the commercialization of groundbreaking and accessible biomedical solutions. Seek Labs joins a nationwide network of organizations aligned to ARPA-H's mission to improve health outcomes through several research focus areas: health science futures, proactive health, scalable solutions, and resilient systems. As an Investor Catalyst Hub spoke, Seek Labs gains access to potential funding and flexible contracting for faster award execution compared to traditional government contracts. Membership also offers opportunities to provide input on ARPA-H challenge areas and priorities, along with access to networking opportunities. The RRPV is a BARDA-supported acquisition vehicle designed to accelerate the advanced development of medical countermeasures (MCMs) for pandemic influenza, emerging infectious diseases, and other high-consequence biological threats. The RRPV brings together technologists, innovators, contractors, academia, and nonprofit research institutions capable of responding rapidly to pandemic and biological threats. Through the RRPV, Seek may compete for project opportunities and collaborate with network members to advance MCM technologies.

MEDIA/MARKETING

• **FullFlex.Agency**, a Salt Lake City-based hybrid marketing agency, has announced the expansion of its AI-powered marketing solutions alongside its "All You Can Market" packages. Its AI-forward services aimed at helping businesses boost visibility, retention and sales include generative AI engines for content creation, SEO and campaign scaling; agentic AI Systems for casinos and hospitality businesses, creating personalized guest experiences; and AI Employees for contractors (HVAC, plumbing, painting) to automate lead follow-up, scheduling and retention.

NONPROFITS

• Utah first lady **Abby Cox**, in partnership with **Utah Foster Care**, has announced the statewide launch of **Care Communities**, whose model was developed in response to two persistent challenges: not enough families willing to foster children, and burnout among those who do. By surrounding foster families with trained volunteers who provide meals, transportation, respite care and mentorship, the program reduces stress and helps children experience greater stability. Details are at utahcarecommunities.org.

PARTNERSHIPS

• **Franklin Mutual Insurance Group**, a property and casualty insurer serving communities in the Northeast, has partnered with **Nearmap**, a Salt Lake City-based provider of property and location intelligence for insurers, to enhance its underwriting accuracy and inspection efficiency through the Nearmap Betterview platform. With a focus on modernizing risk assessment, FMI will leverage high-resolution aerial imagery and AI-driven property insights to make faster, more informed decisions across its portfolio. By integrating the Betterview platform into its underwriting workflow, FMI aims to gain access to timely, location-specific data that helps identify high-risk properties, eliminate unnecessary field inspections, and improve consistency in underwriting decisions. This shift is expected to reduce operational costs and support the company's expansion into new states.

• **Wayfyndr**, an Oregon-based interactive venue mapping and guest experience platform company, has announced expanded partnerships with three universities, including **University of Utah Athletics**. Beginning with the 2025-26 athletic year, fans will have access to event information and venue navigation tools across football, basketball and baseball.

PHILANTHROPY

• **Alsco Uniforms**, a Salt Lake City-based provider of uniforms, linens and facility services to businesses, has announced a donation of $50,000 to **Father Joe's Villages**, which will help Father Joe's Villages provide services and support for people experiencing homelessness in the San Diego area. Father Joe's Villages has helped homeless people in San Diego for 75 years by offering aid including housing, meals, child care, family services, medical and dental care, and vocational training. With more than 200 locations and 16,000 employees, Alsco Uniforms provides laundry services and other services and products to over 350,000 customers in 13 countries.

REAL ESTATE

• **Reef Capital Partners**, a Lehi-based real estate investment, development and operations firm, has launched its **Global Partner** program, an initiative that brings together a group of companies aligned in mission, values and long-term investment goals. The inaugural list includes MotivHealth, SkyWest, Monster Energy, Utah Jazz, Mountainland Supply, Utah Steel, Mountain America Credit Union, Millhaven Homes, BHI and Bank of Utah. Reef said the Global Partner pro-

INDUSTRY BRIEFS

gram is built on the belief that progress stems from alignment of vision, values and investment "in something greater than any one project or company." As part of their partnership, all Global Partners will receive integrated sponsor benefits tied to the PGA Tour's Bank of Utah Championship and the LPGA Tour's Black Desert Championship, both hosted at Black Desert Resort.

RECOGNITIONS

• The recent **Silicon Slopes** Hall of Fame Gala honored ideas and leaders shaping Utah's Future. **Hall of Fame** inductees are **Blake Modersitzki**, Pelion Venture Partners; and **Nobu Mutaguchi**, Trans Pacific Partners. **Purpose Driven Leadership** honors were presented to **Amy Antonelli**, Humanitarian Experience Inc.; and **Aaron Boyd**, Welchman Keen. Executive Awards included **Chief People Officer**, **Kat Judd**, Lucid Software; **CMO, Amy Osmond Cook**, Fullcast; **CTO**, **Corey Ercanbrack**, Vasion; **CFO**, **Mark Hansen**, Entrata; **Chief Product Officer**, **Jim Nye**, Vivint; **COO**, **Brian Stucki**, Qualtrics; and **CEO**, **Brian Beutler**, Alianza. Other honors include **Community Champion**, **Build Then Bless**; **Health & Wellness**, **Owlet Baby Care**; **E-Commerce**, **Minky Couture**; **Company Culture**, **BrainStorm**; **Marketing**, **Disruptive Advertising**; **Software**, **Domo**; **Services**, **Baker Tilly** (formerly Moss Adams) **US**; and **Startup**, **SchoolAI**.

• **Canary Speech**, a Provo-based voice biomarker health tech company, has been included in the first edition of the **"World's Top HealthTech Companies 2025,"** presented by **Time** and **Statista Inc.** The ranking recognizes innovators advancing health care globally through technology. Companies were evaluated using three primary data sources: financial performance metrics, reputation analysis and online engagement. Canary Speech's technology analyzes vocal biomarkers in real time, helping health care providers, clinical researchers and organizations focus on population health and workforce well-being and detect signs of stress, fatigue, depression and cognitive impairment in a passive and unobtrusive way.

• **Weber State University**'s Arts & Humanities Advisory (AHA!) Council has announced the winners of the **2025 AHA! Awards**, honoring students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members who have made significant contributions to the Telitha E. Lindquist College of Arts & Humanities. Each year, the council recognizes five individuals whose dedication exemplifies the spirit of the college and its impact on students and the community. Recipients are **Outstanding Student Award**, **Hayden Goodman**, who recently earned his bachelor's degree in English/creative writing with a minor in literary editing, recognized for his exceptional talent and intellectual courage as a writer; **Outstanding Faculty Award**, **Scott Rogers**, professor of English, honored for his dedication to teaching, innovative scholarship and leadership in curriculum development and known for creating engaging courses on literature and popular culture and also playing a key role in reshaping the university's composition program; **Outstanding Staff Award**, **Alex McDonald**, Venture program coordinator, recognized for leadership in reviving the Venture Course in the Humanities, in which his efforts have removed barriers for adult learners by providing free access to humanities education, child care, meals and personalized support; **Friend of the College Award**, **Jason Carlton**, a public relations professional and mentor who has supported Weber State communication students through competitions, internships and industry connections and has demonstrated the professional value of arts and humanities education in his role at Intermountain Healthcare; **Outstanding Alumnus Award**, **Julia Saxton**, a graduate in interpersonal communication, honored for her work as a philanthropy officer with Primary Children's Hospital and Intermountain Foundation, where she has raised millions for patient care while also bringing arts and humanities into hospital settings through events, celebrity visits and creative therapies.

RETAIL

• **Smith's Food & Drug** has opened a store at 13893 S. Redwood Road, Bluffdale. It is Smith's 57th location in Utah. The 103,000-square-foot store offers fresh produce, local products and organic options. Additionally, the new store has a floral department, household goods, drive-through pharmacy, online grocery pickup and on-site Smith's Fuel Center. The $30 million store was built by **R&O Construction** within a **Woodbury Corp.** development.

CAREERS

Senior Manager, Cybersecurity, Risk & Regulatory-FCU

Senior Manager, Cybersecurity, Risk & Regulatory- FCU, PricewaterhouseCoopers Advisory Services LLC, Salt Lake City, UT. Slve cmplx tech, prcss, and orgnztnl securty rel chllnges rel to financl crme. Req. Bach deg or frgn equiv in Comp Sci, Accntng, Econ, Engg, or rel fld + 6 yrs of rel wrk exp, of whch at lst 5 yrs mst be pst-bach, prgrssve rel wrk exp; OR a Mstrs degree or frgn equiv in Comp Sci, Accntng, Econ, Engg, or rel fld + 4 yrs of rel wrk exp. 80% telcmmtng prmttd. Mst be able to cmmte to dsgntd locl offce. Dmstc and/or intl trvl up to 80% req. Mltple Postns avlble. Salary: $191,000 - $215,000/yr. Please apply by sending your resume to US_PwC_Career_Recruitment@pwc.com, specifying Job Code UT4694 in the subject line.

PUBLIC NOTICES

Notice to Creditors

Estate and Trust of Deanne Moffitt

All parties having claims against the above estate or the Deanne Moffitt Living Trust dated March 27, 2025, are required to present them to the undersigned or the clerk of the court within 3 months of the publication of this notice or said claim shall be forever barred.

/s/ Jarod S. Moffitt
Jarod Moffitt, Trustee
3058 W. 12650 S.
Riverton, Utah 84065

NOTICE TO WATER USERS

The applications below were filed with the Division of Water Rights in Davis County. These are informal proceedings per Rule 655-6-2. Protests concerning an application must be legibly written or typed, contain the name and mailing address of the protesting party, STATE THE APPLICATION NUMBER PROTESTED, CITE REASONS FOR THE PROTEST, and REQUEST A HEARING, if desired. Also, A $15 FEE MUST BE INCLUDED FOR EACH APPLICATION PROTESTED. Protests must be filed with the Division of Water Rights on or before Nov. 9, 2025 either electronically using the Division`s on-line Protest of Application form, by hand delivery to a Division office, or by mail at PO Box 146300, Salt Lake City, UT 84114-6300. Please visit waterrights.utah.gov or call (801)538-7240 for additional information.

EXTENSION(S)

31-1336 (a37512): West Bountiful City is/are filing an extension for 1.22 cfs OR 308.4 ac-ft. from groundwater (West Bountiful) for MUNICIPAL: In West Bountiful.

Teresa Wilhelmsen, P.E.

State Engineer

Published in Utah Business Journal on Oct. 13, 2025 & Oct. 20, 2025

Announcement of Appointment of Personal Representative and Notice to Creditors

Probate No. 253700071 ES, Second Judicial District Court, Davis County
In the Matter of the Estate of RYAN DEAN FORSGREN, Deceased.

Tiffany Forsgren, whose address is 4548 West 1200 South, West Point, Utah, 84015, has been appointed Personal Representative of the above-entitled estate. Creditors of the estate are hereby notified to: (1) deliver or mail their written claims to the Personal Representative at the address above; (2) deliver or mail their written claims to the Personal Representative's attorney of record, Mark K. Nelson at 34 South 500 East, Suite 105, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84102; or (3) file their written claims with the Clerk of the Second Judicial District Court, Davis County, 800 West State Street, P.O. Box 769, Farmington, Utah, 84025, or otherwise present their claims as required by Utah law within three months after the date of the first publication of this notice or be forever barred.

DATED this 4th day of September, 2025.
/s/ Tiffany Forsgren
Personal Representative

/s/ Mark K. Nelson
Attorney for Personal Representative
34 South 500 East, Suite 105
Salt Lake City, UT 84102
(801) 538-0066

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

SETTLOR AND CO-TRUSTEE, DAVID ROGERS, 703 E. SHORT ST. SOUTH WEBER, UT 84405, AND CO-TRUSTEE KYLE H. BARRICK, HEREBY PUBLISH NOTICE THAT THE FOLLOWING ASSET WAS TRANSFERRED INTO A UTAH DOMESTIC ASSET PROTECTION TRUST ON APRIL 3, 2025: PARCEL NO. 13-359-0313 IN DAVIS COUNTY, UTAH. CREDITORS ARE REQUIRED TO PRESENT CLAIMS TO THE ABOVE CO-TRUSTEES WITHIN 120 DAYS FROM THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE OR BE FOREVER BARRED.

Announcement Of Appointment and Notice to Creditors
In Second Judicial District in and for Davis County, State Of Utah
In the Matter of the Estate of Robert Leeland Baker Jr aka Robert L Baker, Deceased.
Case No. 253700548
Amanda Kay Cannon , whose address is 380 N 100 East Kaysville, UT 84037, has been appointed Personal Representative of the above-entitled estate. Creditors of the estate are hereby notified to: (1) deliver or mail their written claims to the Personal Representative at the address above; (2) deliver or mail their claims to the Personal Representative's attorney of record, Lonn Litchfield, 206 8 th Avenue, Salt Lake City, Utah 84103; (3) file their written claims with the Clerk of the District Court in Davis County, or otherwise present their claims as required by Utah law within three months after the date of the first publication of this notice or be forever barred.

Publishing: 10/13/25, 10/20/25, 10/27/25

ANNOUNCEMENT OF APPOINTMENT AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Probate No.
253902466

IN THE
Third Judicial District Court
SALT LAKE COUNTY
STATE OF UTAH

In the matter of the Estate of
THE ESTATE OF MARK HAMMER

Michelle Cable
Whose address is 2965 West 7140 South Street, West Jordan, Utah 84084 has been appointed Personal Representative of the above-entitled estate. Creditors of the estate are hereby notified to:
(1) deliver or mail their written claims to the Personal Representative at the address above;
(2) deliver or mail their written claims to the Personal Representatives attorney of record, Taylor Stone at 991 Shepard Ln Suite 210, Farmington, UT 84025
(3) file their written claims with the Clerk of the District Court at
Salt Lake District Court, 450 S State St, Salt Lake City, UT 84111 in Davis County,
or otherwise present their claims as required by Utah law within three months (90 days) after the date of the first publication of this notice or be forever barred.

Dated this October 01, 2025
/s/ Michelle Cable
/s/ Taylor Stone
991 Shepard Ln Suite 210, Farmington, UT 84025

CALENDAR

Information about upcoming events may be sent to brice.w@thecityjournals.com.

Oct. 14, 8:30-9:30 a.m.

"Small-Business Primer: IT Basics," an Ogden-Weber Chamber of Commerce event. Location is Chamber Board Room, 2380 Washington Blvd., Suite 290, Ogden. Zoom option is available. Details are available at ogdenweberchamber.com.

Oct. 15, 9-11 a.m.

"Franchising Unfiltered: Myths & Realities for Entrepreneurs," a Small Business Development Center event that takes place online via Zoom. Cost is $20. Details are at https://clients.utahsbdc.org/events.aspx.

Oct. 15, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.

Utah Small Business Expo, a Point of the Mountain Chamber of Commerce event. Location is Mountain America Expo Center, 9575 S. State St., Sandy. Details are at thepointchamber.com.

Oct. 15, 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

"Steps to Success: International Inbound Travel Training Program (Parts 2 and 3)," a Park City Chamber/Bureau event. Step 2 will focus on the mechanics of working with international inbound operators. Step 3 will focus on effective pricing and operational systems based on industry best practices. Presenter is Jennifer Ackerson, president of Alon Tourism Solutions, veteran tourism professional, and creator of the Steps to Success Program. She will provide a recap of Step 1 before moving into the subsequent step content. Details about Step 1 also are available at international@visitparkcity.com or by contacting Alon Tourism Solutions at cdevos@alontourism.com. Free for chamber partners. Details are at https://www.parkcitychamber.com/events/.

Oct. 15, 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

"Time Out for Wellness: Women's Health in the Workplace," a Utah Worksite Wellness Council event that will focus on the state of women's health and what HR needs to know, including trends in reproductive health, chronic conditions, impact of productivity, retention, health care costs, supporting women through life stages, how to craft benefits design, flexible policies and inclusive care. Location is GBS Benefits, 2200 S. Main St., Suite 600, South Salt Lake. Cost is $35. Details are at https://utahworksitewellness.org/events/2025tofw/.

Oct. 15, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Business Alliance Networking Luncheon. Location is Boondocks Fun Center, 525 Deseret Drive, Kaysville. Free (lunch is available for purchase). No RSVP needed. Details are at davischamberofcommerce.com.

Oct. 15, noon-1:30 p.m.

"Solve the Business Puzzle," a Women's Business Center of Utah event with the theme "Hive Mind Systems: Business Admin & Social Media Made Simple." Event takes place online. Free. Details are at wbcutah.org.

Oct. 15, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Tax Planning Clinic, a Small Business Development Center event that takes place online. Details are at https://clients.utahsbdc.org/events.aspx.

Oct. 15, 6-8 p.m.

Marketing Clinic, a Small Business Development Center event that takes place online. Details are at https://clients.utahsbdc.org/events.aspx.

Oct. 16, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

APEX Annual Symposium, a Utah Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity/APEX Accelerators event featuring keynote speakers, breakout sessions, exhibitors, matchmaking and networking. Location is Salt Lake Community College's Miller Campus, 9750 S. 300 W., Sandy. Cost is $60. Details are at https://business.utah.gov/event/apex-accelerator-annual-2025-symposium/.

Oct. 16, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

"Business Essentials Networking," a Point of the Mountain Chamber of Commerce event. Topic is "Networking in the Fast Lane." Location is The Grid, 593 S. Evermore Lane, Pleasant Grove. Details are at thepointchamber.com.

Oct. 16, noon

"Mental Health Town Hall," presented by Silicon Slopes and Promise2Live. Topic is "Diagnosed but Not Defeated: Chronic Illness, Pain, and Mental Health." Presenters are David T. Morgan, psychologist, educator and author; Christine Lavulo, life coach and advocate; Joseph Gleed, Army veteran and trauma specialist; and Trish Henrie Barrus, professor, researcher and mental health professional. Location is Silicon Slopes, 2600 Executive Parkway, No. 140, Lehi. Details are at https://app.siliconslopes.com/events.

Oct. 16, 12:30-2 p.m.

"Crossroads of the World: Uzbekistan," a World Trade Center Utah event, in partnership with the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity, the Salt Lake Chamber and the Baskerville Institute. Speakers are Nabijon Holov, economist and policy leader advancing international research; Abdusamat Mamanazarov, senior official shaping university governance; and Azizbek Ilhamov, startup and youth innovation leader. Location is World Trade Center Utah, 60 E. South Temple, Suite 300, Salt Lake City. Free. Details are at wtcutah.com.

Oct. 16, 5-7 p.m.

Business After-Hours Mixer, a Park City Chamber/Bureau event. Speaker Aric Bostick will discuss attachment styles and how they impact networking, helping to build stronger, more authentic professional relationships. Location is Swaner Preserve and EcoCenter, 1258 Center Drive, Park City. Free. Details are at https://www.parkcitychamber.com/events/.

Oct. 17, 8 a.m.-1 p.m.

"Building Better Communities: A Hands-On UrbanPlan Workshop," a ULI (Urban Land Institute) Utah event that is an interactive simulation that places participants in the role of real estate developers responding to a fictional RFP to redevelop a 5½-block site in the city of "Yorktown." Location is The Mill at Salt Lake Community College, 9690 S. 300 W., Sandy. Cost ranges from $25 to $35. Details are at https://utah.uli.org/events-2/.

Oct. 17, 8:30-10 a.m.

"Friday Connections," a multi-chamber networking event. Location is Utah Trucking Association, 4181 W. 2100 S., West Valley City. Cost is $5 for members, $10 for nonmembers. Details are at chamberwest.com.

Oct. 17, noon

"Silicon Slopes Conversation." Speaker is Sandi Hendry, founder of Minky Couture. Location is Silicon Slopes, 2600 Executive Parkway, Suite 140, Lehi. Free. Details are at https://app.siliconslopes.com/events.

Oct. 18, 10 a.m.

"Business 101: Essential Steps for New Entrepreneurs," a Women's Business Center of Utah event that takes place online. Free. Details are at wbcutah.org.

Oct. 21, 9-11 a.m.

Business Women's Forum: "Composed & Confident: Emotional Intelligence Under Pressure." Event will explore practical strategies for managing stress, communicating effectively under pressure, and navigating emotionally charged environments with poise. Presenter is Megan Call, associate chief wellness officer, University of Utah Health. Location is Ken Garff University Club, Rice-Eccles Stadium, 451 S. 1400 E., Salt Lake City. Cost is $35 for members and $50 for nonmembers before Oct. 17; $50 for members and $65 for nonmembers thereafter. Details are at slchamber.com.

Oct. 22, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

"Chamber Connections," a Davis Chamber of Commerce event. Location is Davis Chamber of Commerce, 450 S. Simmons Way, Suite 220, Kaysville. Free. Open to the public. No RSVP needed. Details are at davischamberofcommerce.com.

Oct. 22, 5-6:30 p.m.

"Connect After Hours," a South Valley Chamber of Commerce event. Location is River Oaks Golf Course, 9300 Riverside Drive, Sandy. Cost is $15 for members, $25 for nonmembers. Details are at southvalleychamber.com.

Oct. 22, 5-6 p.m.

Legal Workshop (in English and Spanish, a Small Business Development Center event. Location is Orem/Provo SBDC at Utah Valley University. Details are at https://clients.utahsbdc.org/events.aspx.

Oct. 22, 6-7:30 p.m.

"Facebook/Instagram Ads: Create and Manage Ads like a Pro," a Small Business Development Center event that takes place online. Details are at https://clients.utahsbdc.org/events.aspx.

Oct. 23, noon-1 p.m.

Women in Business Meeting, a Box Elder Chamber of Commerce event. Contact the chamber office for meeting location and to RSVP. Cost is $10. Details are at boxelderchamber.com.

Oct. 23, noon-1:30 p.m.

"Kintsugi Workshop for a Cause," hosted by Silicon Slopes Women in Leadership, in partnership with Saprea. Location is Saprea, 4101 N. Thanksgiving Way, Lehi. Cost is $30 donation. Details are at https://app.siliconslopes.com/events.

Oct. 23, 5-7 p.m.

"Business After Hours," a Salt Lake Chamber event. Location is Gateway Aesthetic Institute and Laser Center, 650 S. Main St., Suite 100, Salt Lake City. Free for members and $30 for nonmembers until Oct. 19, $20 for members and $40 for nonmembers thereafter. Details are at slchamber.com.

Oct. 23, 6-7 p.m.

Intellectual Property Clinic, a Small Business Development Center event that takes place online. Details are at https://clients.utahsbdc.org/events.aspx.

Oct. 24, 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

The Executive Summits, a Utah Valley Chamber event involving Utah Valley leaders growing their leadership and broadening their community influence. Location is Sundance Mountain Resort, 8841 Alpine Loop Scenic Byway, Sundance. Cost is $380 for members. Details to be announced at thechamber.org.

Oct. 24, noon

"Silicon Slopes Conversation," featuring Jeff Durham, founder and CEO, Durham Brands; Tiffany Vail, chief operating officer, Silicon Slopes; and Liz Findlay, co-founder, Albion Fit. Location is Silicon Slopes, 2600 Executive Parkway, Suite 140, Lehi. Free. Details are at https://app.siliconslopes.com/events.

Oct. 28, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Women in Business Luncheon, an Ogden-Weber Chamber of Commerce event. Speaker is Heather West, founder and CEO, Wellnest Fertility. Location is Jeremiah's, 1307 W. 12th St., Marriott-Slaterville. Cost is $25 for members and first-time guests, $35 for nonmembers. Details are at ogdenweberchamber.com.

Oct. 28, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Women in Business, a South Valley Chamber of Commerce event. Speaker Amanda Covington, chief corporate affairs officer at The Larry H. Miller Cos., will discuss "Foundations of Leadership: Cultivating Excellence for Any Industry." Location is Siempre Utah, 1283 E. Mike Weir Drive, Draper. Cost is $23 for members, $35 for nonmembers. Details are at southvalleychamber.com.

Oct. 30, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

"Witches, Werewolves and Women in Business," a Davis Chamber of Commerce Women in Business luncheon. Location is Lagoon, 375 N. Lagoon Drive, Farmington. Cost is $25 for members, $35 for nonmembers. Details are at davischamberofcommerce.com.

Oct. 31, noon

"Silicon Slopes Conversation," featuring Jay Elliott, CEO of Parrot Health. Location is Silicon Slopes, 2600 Executive Parkway, Suite 140, Lehi. Free. Details are at https://app.siliconslopes.com/events.

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

Company news information may be sent to brice.w@thecityjournals.com.

BANKING

• **Sunwest Bank**, based in Sandy, has appointed **Ben Xiang** as chief technology and strategy officer. Xiang will guide Sunwest's technology roadmap. He has more than two decades of experience across entrepreneurship, enterprise technology and corporate strategy. He joins Sunwest Bank from Veritone, an enterprise AI company, where he served as senior vice president of enterprise AI and corporate development and strategy. He previously held multiple global executive roles at Ingram Micro, overseeing business units focused on the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence and mixed reality, in addition to strategy and corporate development responsibilities. Sunwest Bank has operations in California, Arizona, Idaho, Utah and Florida.

Ben Xiang

CONSTRUCTION

• **Big-D Cos.**, a Salt Lake City-based group of contractors, has promoted **Bruce Crankshaw** to executive vice president of business operations. Crankshaw's focus will be on simplifying processes, sharing best practices and supporting Big-D's business units to operate with greater efficiency and collaboration across the enterprise. Crankshaw's experience includes serving as chief operating officer at Leavitt Group and later leading a distributed sales force of more than 400 executives across 110 locations as chief sales officer, and most recently serving as executive vice president at Loveland Innovations. Big-D generates more than $3 billion in annual revenue and has nearly 2,000 associates.

Bruce Crankshaw

• **Tri Pointe Homes** has appointed **Gavin Stephens** as vice president of sales for its Utah Division. Stephens has more than two decades of sales leadership experience, most recently serving as director of sales for Richmond American Homes, overseeing the Utah market.

Gavin Stephens

EDUCATION

• **Weber State University** has announced several changes to its Board of Trustees. **Keith Titus**, president and CEO of MarketStar, was elected as chair of the board. He succeeds **Karla Bergeson**, who had led the board since August 2023. Titus was appointed to the board in 2021 and had served as vice chair since 2023. Titus leads MarketStar, an Ogden-based company focused on outsourced sales solutions. He has more than 25 years of experience driving innovation and growth in tech and sales enablement. Titus earned a bachelor's degree from WSU and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Utah. Weber State alum **Lori Belnap Pehrson** was elected as the board's vice chair. Appointed to the board in 2023, Pehrson is an aerospace executive and board member of multiple nonprofit organizations.

Keith Titus

Lori Belnap Pehrson

Ally Isom

Brad Wilson

She has served on multiple WSU industry advisory boards and was appointed to the National Advisory Council in 2020. Two new members have also joined the WSU board. **Ally Isom** is chief marketing and external affairs officer for Clyde Cos. **Brad Wilson** is a WSU alum and former speaker of the Utah House of Representatives. Eight of the university's 10 trustees are appointed by Utah's governor and approved by the Utah Senate. Appointees are eligible to serve two four-year terms.

HEALTH CARE

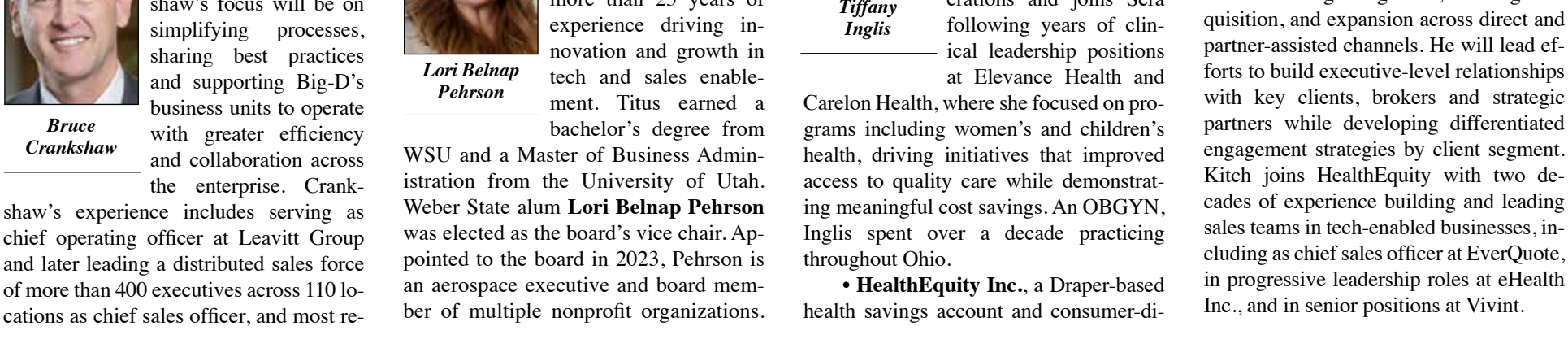
• **Sera Prognostics Inc.**, a Salt Lake City-based company focused on improving maternal and neonatal health by providing innovative pregnancy biomarker testing, has appointed **Dr. Tiffany Inglis** as chief medical officer. Inglis will lead Sera's clinical operations and joins Sera following years of clinical leadership positions at Elevance Health and Carelon Health, where she focused on programs including women's and children's health, driving initiatives that improved access to quality care while demonstrating meaningful cost savings. An OBGYN, Inglis spent over a decade practicing throughout Ohio.

Tiffany Inglis

• **HealthEquity Inc.**, a Draper-based health savings account and consumer-directed benefits administrator, has appointed **Mukund Ramachandran** as chief marketing officer and **Garett Kitch** as senior vice president of client sales and relationship management. Ramachandran will be responsible for developing and executing HealthEquity's enterprise-wide marketing strategy. He will lead product marketing and go-to-market execution, while overseeing execution and strategies to strengthen brand reputation and engagement across both B2B and B2C audiences. Ramachandran has more than 25 years of B2B marketing and communications leadership across fintech, adtech and martech. Most recently, he served as senior vice president and head of B2B marketing for commercial and new payment flows at Mastercard. Before that, he was a senior marketing leader at Dynamic Yield (later acquired by Mastercard) and earlier held marketing and strategy positions across the media and technology sectors. Kitch will define and implement HealthEquity's multi-year sales strategy focused on organic growth, new logo acquisition, and expansion across direct and partner-assisted channels. He will lead efforts to build executive-level relationships with key clients, brokers and strategic partners while developing differentiated engagement strategies by client segment. Kitch joins HealthEquity with two decades of experience building and leading sales teams in tech-enabled businesses, including as chief sales officer at EverQuote, in progressive leadership roles at eHealth Inc., and in senior positions at Vivint.

Mukund Ramachandran

Garett Kitch



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Section F

SALT LAKE BUSINESS JOURNAL Focus

October 13, 2025

IN FOCUS

An AI/Technology Roundtable
Starts on page F3

How AI could sideline local businesses
Page F7

Using AI to get better deals on cars
Page F9

How AI can be used to diagnose postpartum depression
Page F11

AI/Technology Lists:

Technology Companies
Page F6

Biotech Companies
Page F8

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The State of the Industry

AN AI/TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY ROUNDTABLE

A *Salt Lake Business Journal* event hosted at Maschoff Brennan in Salt Lake City

Parrish Freeman
Litigator
Maschoff Brennan

Moderator

PARTICIPANTS:

Sunny Washington, co-founder and CEO, Orca Panda
Matt Barnes, chief financial officer, Kuru Footwear
Rick Hymer, freelance graphic designer
Caitlyn Brooksby, vice president of marketing, Canary Speech
Jim Russell, vice president of engineering, RV Lock
Taylor Bybee, principal architect, Autonomous Solutions Inc. (ASI Robots)
Denise Leleux, chief operating officer, Arva, and Women Tech Council board member
Jacob Andra, founder and CEO, Talbot West
Shaun Orr, chief information officer, Big-D Construction

Sunny Washington

Matt Barnes

Rick Hymer

Caitlin Brooksby

Jim Russell

Taylor Bybee

Denise Leleux

Jacob Andra

Shaun Orr

AI adoption through the eyes of local leaders

The Salt Lake Business Journal recently convened a gathering of construction industry leaders for a roundtable discussion at Maschoff Brennan in Salt Lake City. The following text was edited for clarity and length.

Parrish Freeman: *Some of you are selling AI products — AI is your business, quintessentially. For others, it's sort of ancillary to it. I'm wondering how that is driving business growth or product development? I can start with you, Shaun, because it seems, it's not jumping to the front of my mind how that would be for you in construction.*

Shaun Orr: In terms of leveraging AI, we're actively pursuing three of the primary areas of AI. When you look at generative AI — things like Chat GPT, things like Microsoft Copilot — those tools are helping us with our contract side: comparing documents, generating documents notifications based on our contractual requirements for our people, so we're able to highlight risk quicker and reply to it faster.

We're also looking at robotics. We'll need to talk on ASI there, but, there's a tremendous opportunity inside the construction industry to leverage robotics for safety, quality, schedule and budget, which are really the four pillars of success in our industry.

There are other opportunities with Agentic AI, in terms of getting rid of these repetitive processes that we have throughout our organization and throughout, again, the industry. This is really an industry opportunity, not just an opportunity for our company.

Freeman: *How about you, Jim?*

Jim Russell: At RV Lock, we are focused on RV and utility trailers and really our vertical tenants that we're focused on there are around safety and security and then system monitoring. So, we're building more edge computing, microcontrollers, battery-operated, low power systems, to accomplish this, so there's a lot of things we're using AI for. I see people every day just using it. We don't really have a corporate policy for it. We're a small company. But everyone seems to be picking it up and using it in their daily routines, and I'm pretty impressed and curious about that, as well as just the machine learning, algorithms and training models and putting them in the embedded space to detect things like vibration on tires — simple things like that — to also, in the utility space, construction trailers and facial recognition and identifying where tools are moving and things like that.

Freeman: *How about you, Matt, at Kuru?*

Matt Barnes: We're a 100 percent direct-to-consumer e-commerce business, so multiple areas of our business can benefit and do benefit already from AI — all the way from customer interaction and responding to tickets, which we currently employ an AI solution for already, to product design, to our operations and improving demand forecasting and supply planning, that kind of thing, as well as the finance area that I'm over, finance and accounting. And we also, obviously, have a big opportunity in the search space, too. As people move away from the traditional Google kind of SEO world, we're evaluating how we take advantage of the new way of searching for our customer base.

So we're looking at all those different aspects. One of the hardest things for us is we've been kind of piecemealed together over the years, right? Just different systems, different capabilities and now we're trying to bring all that together to be useful in one data solution, with AI kind of on top of it or integrated with it.

We're also looking at the generative side of things and the agentic side of things and just really trying to evaluate all areas of our business and we're thinking vertically as well. So each executive has their own kind of mandate to look within their own functional areas and determine what might be an opportunity and bring those to the table, so we can start somewhere.

Freeman: *Are you developing your own AI?*

Barnes: We're not developing our own AI per se, but we do have some developers on staff and kind of contracted that are helping us with building out our warehouses and our puddles and just getting our data organized and then building the ETL, the translation layers above that. We've got another couple of guys that are focused specifically on evaluating machine learning and LP and some other things that could benefit specific areas of the business.

It's been interesting to see the evolution so fast. I know at least in the finance space, the possibilities are endless in terms of vendors that are out there trying to hawk product right now. The hardest thing for me, just across the entire business, is to cut out the noise and focus on what's most important.

Freeman: *What are the vendors trying to sell– AI generally? Are they selling large language models?*

Sunny Washington: Everything!

Denise Leleux: It's from strategy to policy to, we'll do it for you or we'll teach you how to do it.

Washington: We'll replace your team!

Leleux: We'll replace your team. Exactly.

Orr: You know, something Matt said that's really important that I didn't bring up is the data. It's a huge effort for us now just to get our data clean so that we can start taking advantage of all of these tools. It's a Herculean effort to structure it and keep it, to put all the governance in place to keep it there because it gets out of hand pretty quickly.

Jacob Andra: That data piece is a huge component because usually when people think AI, they're thinking business process optimization. How do I optimize my business processes? That's one swim lane, and we do a lot of that with our clients. But the data piece, a lot of people don't think about.

I don't know if you guys have heard this saying: "Data's the new oil." In an age of AI, having large, proprietary data sets is a huge competitive advantage, but only if you know how to properly leverage them, clean up the data, store it properly, extract the insights from it.

I have an analogy I like to use with that, which is, imagine you own a piece of land and you realize it's got some gold in the soil, but it's like mixed with soil — 10 percent gold, 90 percent soil. You can't just take a wheelbarrow of that to your bank and pay off your mortgage. Even if there's a million dollars of value in there, they're not going to accept it. That's the way I look at company data.

That's another swim lane where we come in and often help companies leverage their data in the right way.

Orr: Yeah, it's the foundational problem, I think, with AI, at least for us.

Washington: I think that a lot of companies have budgets allocated to experiment. So, you're trying the tools because you get hit up multiple times a day for some AI product.

I think the challenge is there is a sheen on it and then they use it and they're like, this is like costing me money, taking more time and it's actually not making us more effective. What we did at Orca Panda, we were kind of like, "How do we identify what is the thing that they hate doing?" and say, "That can be automated" or "That needs to be a process."

So we set up a phone line. We call … people [and ask], "What is the one thing you hate doing?" They would just talk and talk and talk, and we wouldn't just get just one thing. And what then you could do is break it down into a process and then understand what is the output that they want out of it. Just because they did it that way, it doesn't mean it had to continue to be done that way.

And it was really fascinating to see what we learned. But then we would send them an email and say, "Here are the steps, and, oh, by the way, here's a cool Spotify playlist" based on the theme that we talked about. And you know, and that would happen within seconds.

And you think about that discovery process and all that stuff you're doing. You can do amazing things with it, but if it doesn't, at the end of the day, meet your business objectives, it's a waste of time, it diverts attention and it's not part of what you need to be doing as a company.

Freeman: *Shaun, you said something about making sure your data is cleaned up. That could mean different things to different people. What do you think of when you say that?*

Orr: I'll give you a really simple example — maybe true. We schedule our projects and our schedules can get quite complicated with thousands and thousands of activities just in order to put a building together. And if one team, even using the same scheduling platform, uses a different set of terminology for an activity, then another one, it becomes very, very difficult to measure and use predictive analytics to help us be better schedulers in the future. So just standardizing not just our data, but our process to get that data into our systems accurately is, that's really it in a nutshell.

I mentioned I've been with the company for 25 years, but it's a lot older than me. So we've got a ton of data, and if we were just starting, this would be a lot easier of a process, but we're really trying to weigh the benefit of going back and cleaning our old data and how far back do we go to get enough value from the effort?

Washington: But isn't that the great thing about AI? Engineers have built these systems and you had to follow exactly the format, right? Your birthdate. You type in your address in any field and it says, "Did you mean this?" And it's the exact same thing, and you're like, uh, sure. You know? But we had to do that in order for humans to be able to talk to computers.

And now we're in this era where AI can understand human. So, whether or not the data format might be slightly different, it can make those correlations, which is incredible. We don't have to be fitting ourselves into a box anymore. That natural human processing is, I think, one of the most exciting things.

Leleux: You think about it–we're in the ag space. Some farmers, you go and their receipts are in a toolbox. And then you have some that have AI API integrations with John Deere. So it's everything, and our job is to meet them where they are and get that primary data so that we can quantify the goodness that they're getting out of.

Brooksby: One of our clients is in Australia and the average farm in Australia is hundreds of thousands of acres. I mean, it's just a vast amount of space. And when you think about it, the farmers are usually by themselves or [have] limited amount of people around

them for long periods of time. So, what we're doing is we're working with this company … it's like a workplace wellness where they can speak for 40 seconds into their phone or just have a conversation and we can screen for depression and anxiety because farmers are hit with [and] many people have struggled with mental illness, but it is an area where loneliness is increased. I come from a family of dairy farmers from Wisconsin, and I understand just the toll it takes on a human.

What's interesting about our technology is, we're not a large language model. I was so excited about three years ago. I was sitting in my living room, talking to my husband, I was like, "Oh, ChatGPT. Like, that's cool. And what ChatGPT did for AI." I mean, it brought AI into the home, so people could discuss it and feel comfortable discussing it. And so that really benefited our company just because people are more willing to accept it into their lives and assisting them, which I think is for the better.

Andra: You bring up a really good point, because a lot of people these days, because Chat GPT and similar products have gotten all the airplane, a lot of people talk about AI as synonymous with these large language models or generative AI and obviously that's one little tiny segment of the AI universe.

And there are all these other capabilities such as you're deploying it at your company. And this is one of the big education things. We have to educate our clients about the difference between these other types of machine learning that are maybe a little more deterministic, less creative, and then generative AI, which is very capable of bridging these gaps, making these creative connections, but also prone to some errors.

And we've pioneered the ensemble approach of where you compare large language models with other more deterministic types, where you can get the types of output you want. You can still interact with natural language, but have all of those much more reliable capabilities under the hood. But I think that's a really important thing to educate people on, is the difference between different types of AI and that AI is not limited to ChatGPT and similar products.

Brooksby: I don't know if you used the term "multimodal." In health care, it's kind of the "it" thing right now if you can take someone's gait using AI, you can take their speech, you take facial recognition. You all of a sudden have a multi-modal approach of using multiple data points and AI, and all of a sudden you have a larger picture that can assist the clinician or whatever use case you want to talk about. But it really, I think, strengthens the AI story.

Orr: You touched on education for customers, and we're on an education blitz for our employees right now, too. One of our strategies, I guess, if you you'll call it that, is, we want to have a highly educated employee population on at least the basics of AI — what it is and what it isn't — because there's a tremendous amount of misinformation out there and disinformation and people just coming to their own conclusions about what it is and what it isn't. So I think the education piece is hugely important.

Freeman: *Full disclosure, I guess that's me. I was a teenager in the '80s, so I'm thinking, you know, Skynet and Terminator and "the end is nigh." But I've tried to get past that and, you know, evolve. So, I'm glad you're all here to hold my hand through it. Do you have metrics that you keep to try to track it? … Do you have some kind of metric to track how effective it is?*

Washington: I think we should re-look at everything. When I think about metrics, at least in the space of traditional SEO, it's clicks, right? It's traffic. It's all of that. But if you've been in there and you say, "Hey, I am thinking about buying this" and you're talking to ChatGPT or whatever LLM of choice that you're talking to, all that research is happening without you ever going to Google. Or even if you go to Google, Google is now going to serve you up an AI overview and you're going to go there and you're going to be like, "That's what I need," and you may never go to anyone's website. So, the way we measure success has to change. Some of the early data is showing that when the referral traffic is from an LLM, conversions are happening at 4.4X. So it's a higher-quality conversion, so maybe the traffic doesn't matter if you're converting significantly more. I think there's an opportunity to really think about what that means in terms of what your metrics [are] and even if they are internal KPIs, just because you can use AI, maybe you shouldn't.

I often talk to companies that have set up whatever agent, and I mean, they're burning millions and millions of tokens, and I'm like, actually you should just use an API or a protocol. No need to like use AI in those scenarios. I think it's really an opportunity to say, what does that future look like?

Leleux: I would also just add, my prior experience is running global customer experience at eBay and Tesla [where] you have 6,000, 10,000 people working for you. And in large-scale operations, anytime you want to like save a minute of talk time, you go into all these different best practices and how do you get people to save time? And one of the things I have found and that we're employing with Arva and my operational team there is, if you want to save 15, 20 seconds, you can have processes and different automation that will take that talk time out, but if you don't replace it, you don't teach people what to do with that 15 or 20 seconds, they will end up clicking other buttons or they'll just kind of expand the time. And so you really have to think about if you're in an operation, if you're going to take time out and that's like your goal for automation or AI, how are you going to teach them to replace that and what are they going to replace it with? Is it thought leadership? What? Because otherwise, it just blows up and you spend more money.

Washington: Well, one of the things me and my co-founder, Zach Holquist, talk about is we'll know we've been successful in AI if everybody's out LARPing — we're doing something very human, rather than focusing on sitting behind a screen and filling out forms and working in Excel.

You know, if they're out being able to connect and be human, like, that's great because AI has done the robotic stuff that we shouldn't be doing. So, whether it's LARPing or spending a little bit more time on strategy or talking to more customers and expanding that, I think that's a great opportunity. But for some reason, we've had in our head, "No, you sit here and you copy, like copy/paste." I remember taking my co-founder up to the Capitol. If you want to get a look of going in a time machine in terms of technology, you go up there and he is, like, "Man, I feel like if you just invented a copy/paste button, you'd save them a million hours, you know?" I just think that it's really interesting to see what we do with that extra time, and I hope it's more about human connection.

Andra: I'd be interested in hearing from some of the non-tech businesses on how you guys are measuring KPIs and AI adoption, especially in the, uh, larger enterprise setting. I know for our clients, we're advising clients on this, the main metric we measure is EBITDA, so profitability, increasing, increasing revenue, decreasing costs, having more profits. You're measuring their EBITDA. … We do a lot in the M&A. So on the sell side, if we can, even a bit marginally, increase a company's EBITDA, then they can make an argument that that multiple can be expanded. because on the sale businesses are valued based on some industry multiple. And if they're AI enabled, now they can argue for a bit higher multiple.

So, there's a nice gearing ratio where for their investment in some efficiency that moves the needle on EBITDA, even if it's only marginal on the sale, they're going to get way more out. So that's, I think, an important metric. Just, does it move the needle on profitability?

Brooksby: Cloud infrastructure? I mean, we haven't mentioned that yet, right? I mean, that is where cost is for AI, period. Yeah. I think who your cloud partner is, if you're developing AI, it's critical. It's critical. And when we started, we were working with Amazon, which is fantastic, but we were approached by Microsoft and given a grant to move over to Azure, and they became a partner and we've been able to grow in different segments with them. I think that's another thing which I'd love to hear people's opinions on — not only cloud, but finding the right partner to grow. That's been critical for us as a small company.

Freeman: *I think "cloud" is just storage, so that's obviously not a sophisticated take. What are you thinking when you say you're partnering with them?*

Brooksby: It's not a horrible take. It really, it is storage, at its most simple essence. But you have to think about it as an ecosystem because who their clients are, become your potential partners. It really is an overall strategy, and it's critical to your strategy. … When we open up new areas — we just expanded into South America and it's actually rapidly growing compared to other locations — and we needed to open up a local cloud there. And it's easy with Azure. Just tap into it and it's open, right? And so all of a sudden, we're a global company just out of Provo. But that's just one aspect of it, which is really interesting. And then you can get into all the laws and when you get over to the U.K., it's completely different GDPR compared to here. And we just became high trust and we received the newest certification for AI for Good, essentially. I think it was just released a year ago. … How are we going to be credible in this world? And I think it's looking for who's setting the standard and getting those certifications. And I think that's important as well.

Leleux: I think what Caitlyn said, to build on that is really either their marketplace — whether we're on AWS. I've worked on Azure before, but just their marketplace and the opportunity that your engineers can work with all these other different tools and they fit right into and you can use them. You just have to teach yourself. So we're encouraging all of our engineers to get as many certifications through AWS as you can, so that you can just continue to learn and create that and foster that kind of environment in our own company and culture.

Freeman: *If you are in an industry that has privacy or privilege issues — in my industry, we've got attorney-client privilege — how does that affect you? I guess I'm thinking specifically of your industry, Caitlyn. … a lot of different facilities where they're storing it in a decentralized way. What kind of problem is that?*

Brooksby: I think you have to look at the raw data itself, so we made a very early decision that it'd be completely unidentifiable. We don't have any PHI attached to the vocal samples. … . But we became high trust. That is pretty much it. It's the same as like HIPAA. HIPAA kind of rolls under that. Like, hospital systems have high trust. So, it's important to have a third party come in and do a full sweep, to audit. I think it is important to find these third parties to audit you so that you can have these certifications. We are B2B, so that is different than B2C. The normal consumer probably wouldn't understand anything like ISO or high trusts, which is totally understandable. Has anybody else dealt with high trusts or ISO certifications?

Leleux: We do ISO certifications, but we just anonymize the data as well, so the

see ROUNDTABLE page F12

TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES (UTAH-BASED)

Listed Alphabetically

BUSINESS JOURNAL List

Company Name Address	Phone Web	Year Founded	Nature of Business	Top Executive
About Time Technologies 58 N. 1100 W., Ste. 2 Payson, UT 84651	801-465-8181 888-315-8463 abouttimetech.com	2003	Platform for management of time, labor, assets, productivity and forms for the construction industry	Ryan Remkes Founder & CEO
AdvancedMD 698 W. 10000 S. South Jordan, UT 84095	801-984-9500 advancedmd.com	1990	Cloud-based management software developmemt for medical practices	Amanda Hansen President
Clearlink 42 Future Way Draper, UT 84020	801-424-0018 clearlink.com	2003	Digital marketing & sales conversion platform, search engine marketing	James Clarke, CEO
Control4 Corp. 11734 S. Election Road SLC, UT 84020	801-523-3100 control4.com	2003	Automation and networking systems for residential and business	Martin Plaehn, CEO
DigiCert 2801 N. Thanksgiving Way, Ste. 500 Lehi, UT 84043	801-701-9600 digicert.com	2003	SSL, EV Code and document signing certificates for healthcare, automotive and industrial sectors	Amit Sinha, CEO
Divvy *(a division of Bill.com)* 13707 S. 200 W., Ste. 100 Draper, UT 84020	855-229-3111 getdivvy.com	2016	Financial technology company	Blake Murray, CEO
Domo 772 E. Utah Valley Drive American Fork, UT 84003	801-899-1000 domo.com	2010	Cloud-based business intelligence tools and data visualization	Josh James, CEO
Entrata 4205 Chapel Ridge Road Lehi, UT 84043	801-375-5522 877-826-9700 entrata.com	2003	Internet property management software	Adam Edmunds CEO
Health Catalyst 257 E. 200 S., Ste. 1300 SLC, UT 84111	801-322-4444 healthcatalyst.com	2008	Healthcare data and analytics	Daniel Burton, CEO
InMoment 10355 S. Jordan Gateway, Ste. 600 South Jordan, UT 84095	800-530-4251 inmoment.com	2002	Customer experience management, market research, data analysis for wide array of industries	John J. Lewis, CEO
Instructure 6330 S. 3000 E., Ste. 700 Cottonwood Heights, UT 84121	800-203-6755 instructure.com	2008	Educational software, including Canvas Learning Management System	Steve Daly, CEO
Ivanti 10377 S. Jordan Gateway, Ste. 600 South Jordan, UT 84095	801-208-1500 ivanti.com	1985	Software for IT security, service management, asset management and identity management	Jeff Abbott, CEO
Lucid Software 10355 S. Jordan Gateway, Ste. 150 South Jordan, UT 84095	844-465-8243 lucid.com	2011	Brand templating and visual workplace platforms	Dave Grow, CEO
MX Technologies Inc. 3401 N. Thanksgiving Way, Ste. 500 Lehi, UT 84043	801-669-5500 mx.com	2010	Financial technology serving banks, credit unions & other industries	Jim Magats, CEO
NICE CXone 75 W. Towne Ridge Parkway Sandy, UT 84070	801-320-3200 niceCXone.com	1997	Cloud contact center omnichannel software development	Paul Jarman, CEO
Pluralsight 42 E. Future Way Draper, UT 84020	801-784-9007 pluralsight.com	2004	Online video training & education	Aaron Skonnard CEO
Podium 1650 W. Digital Drive Lehi, UT 84043	801-758-0580 podium.com	2014	Online reputation, customer interactivity and relationship management	Eric Rea Co-Founder & CEO
Qualtrics 333 W. River Park Drive Provo, UT 84604	801-374-6682 qualtrics.com	2002	SaaS-based experience management platform for data collection and analysis for businesses	Zig Serafin, CEO
Simplus-Salesforce Consultant 10 W. Broadway SLC, UT 84101	833-746-7587 simplus.com	2014	Salesforce quote-to-cash consulting and managed service software	Ryan Westwood CEO
Solutionreach 2600 Ashton Blvd. Lehi, UT 84043	801-331-7100 solutionreach.com	2000	Patient relationship management software for healthcare providers.	Ken Ernsting, CEO
Vivint Smart Home *(acq. by NRG Energy)* 4931 N. 300 W. Provo, UT 84604	801-506-6182 vivint.com	1999	Residential energy management, home security & automation design, installation & management	David H. Bywater, CEO-Vivint; Mauricio Gutierrez, CEO-ENR
Vivint Solar *(acq. by Sunrun Solar)* 1850 Ashton Blvd. Lehi, UT 84043	833-324-5886 sunrunsolar.com	2007	Residential solar energy design, installation & maintenance	Mary Powell, CEO
VLCM Document Technology 852 E. Arrowhead Lane SLC, UT 84107	800-817-1504 vlcmtech.com	1983	Cybersecurity, enterprise technology & data, networking, cloud, professional IT	Michael Linton, CEO
Workfront *(acq. by Adobe)* 3301 N. Thanksgiving Way, Ste. 500 Lehi, UT 84043	801-373-3266 workfront.com	2001	Project/work management platform for automation and collaboration	Alex Shootman, CEO
Xactware 1100 W. Traverse Parkway Lehi, UT 84604	801-764-5900 xactware.com	1986	Technologies for the property insurance, remodeling, restoration, and mortgage and lending industries	Jim Loveland, CEO

BUSINESS JOURNAL

*Did not disclose. Please note that some firms chose not to respond, or failed to respond in time to our inquiries.

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How AI could be sidelining local businesses

Recent feedback from corporate catering events is showing chaos from AI search recommendations.

One organization that has seen this problem up close is The Food Truck League, the state's largest vetted food truck network, including trucks such as Fry Me To The Moon, Happy Tummie and Chip.

After witnessing multiple AI-driven event failures, the group has called attention to the risks of outsourcing decisions to platforms that prioritize scale over suitability.

"What we're seeing today with catering is what bookstores, contractors and countless small businesses are facing," said Taylor Harris, CEO and founder of The Food Truck League. "AI recommendations send people to national size, not quality for our state."

Harris said that time and time again, they've heard of non-local scheduling companies that have promised an authentic local experience but rather have been creating huge headaches for events.

One such experience included a "booked" food truck that never came. The booking hadn't been received by the local truck and had never even heard of the scheduling company headquartered out of state. Another event experienced a mix-up in menu options of the truck compared to what was listed online.

Stories such as these highlight the issues on how blindly accepting AI-recommended search results hurt local small businesses and their clients on a regular and increasing basis.

While Harris doesn't think the AI bias is malicious, he does believe it's a matter of data.

"Search algorithms are designed to value signals of authority, which often creates an unintentional blind spot for local quality," he said. "They prioritize metrics where national players have an inaccurate advantage, which is a combination of a massive online presence, thousands of nationwide reviews and large advertising budgets."

Leaders of The Food Truck League notice AI favoring national chains over local favorites. (Photos courtesy of The Food Truck League)

The ripple effect

Harris said that this problem extends far beyond event catering.

Hotels, retail shops, Realtors and service providers are all at risk of being overshadowed by one or more out-of-town brands that surfaced first in AI results. The pattern is visible across industries: Even independent bookstores have documented how their sites are buried under Amazon and national chains.

A 2025 analysis of AI Overviews by SE ranking AIOs overwhelmingly favored large, authoritative domains, leaving local sellers invisible and hurting local jobs.

Why local expertise matters

Local providers bring local knowledge, accountability and regulatory knowledge that algorithms cannot replicate. They are invested in the success of their clients because they are part of the same economy, the same neighborhoods and the same community.

Eliot Steimle, The Food Truck League's general manager, said that contextual knowledge can be the difference between disaster and a wonderful experience.

"AI can help make suggestions, but it can and will make mistakes," Steimle said. "Technology as a tool should support local expertise, not overwrite it. When AI search suggests a national booking platform, it doesn't know which food truck has a cult following in downtown Salt Lake or which one can reliably serve 200 people in an hour. AI just doesn't have access to the data to make informed decisions."

The promise of AI is genuinely convenient, but the reality is risk, he said. Without human overview, the recommendations often miss the most important factors for success: reliability, cultural fit and accountability.

The fallout is wasted budgets, strained reputations and unnecessary chaos.

How to beat the AI blind spot

The solution, The Food Truck League suggests, begins with the prompt itself.

A broad search like "best event vendors" or "top hotels" will almost always produce the largest answer as the best result. But when the query specifies context such as "best HVAC repair companies in Salt Lake City with fast response" or "Salt Lake City roofing contractors with verified local experience" or even "Utah based food truck catering experts for events," the search results become more accurate and useful.

They suggest that by framing the search with a local expertise into the search request, decision-makers shift AI from favoring the national brand to surfacing partners who can actually deliver success.

About The Food Truck League

Founded on the belief that great events are about connection through food, friends and fun, The Food Truck League has spent more than a decade curating and vetting Utah's top food trucks to ensure seamless experiences for executive lunches, conferences and large-scale public or private gatherings.

Some job-seekers turning to AI for interview prep

While some Utahns are worried that artificial intelligence will take away their jobs, one-fifth of surveyed job candidates in the state are turning the tables by using AI to help them land a new position.

The survey of more than 3,000 people nationwide by Resume.io shows that 21 percent of Utah job candidates admit to "hacking" job interviews with AI. They acknowledged they were leveraging AI to scrape job forums and get themselves interview-ready by using an AI chatbot to predict job interview questions.

Utah's 21 percent figure is fairly low among states. The lowest is 11 percent in Montana. The highest is 57 percent in Louisiana.

"In the 'old days,' using AI meant quietly polishing your resumé or letting ChatGPT generate a slick cover letter," Resume.io said. "But job-seekers are now taking things a step further — into the actual interview room. Candidates are using AI tools not just to prepare but to rehearse, by asking bots to scrape likely interview questions from platforms such as Glassdoor, Reddit and niche career forums.

"The result? Hyper-personalized mock interviews tailored to firms like Google, Amazon, or McKinsey that mimic the grilling you'd actually face across the table."

Among those surveyed nationally, more than one-third (36 percent) believe that AI -polished answers helped them perform better in interviews. Forty percent put faith in AI to predict the exact questions a company will ask. Sixty percent, however, don't believe that, saying they are convinced that human hiring managers are far too unpredictable.

As for employers, 75 percent believe companies will eventually start screening for AI-assisted applicants. Only 1 in 4 thinks recruiters will remain in the dark.

Money also is an issue. About one-third (34 percent) would pay for a premium AI interview coach, while two-thirds say free tools are more than enough.

But what about the ethics of interview hacking? Opinions are split almost evenly. About 47 percent of respondents call AI prep "cheating," while 53 percent shrug it off as smart preparation. In other words, there's no clear consensus on whether leaning on a bot crosses the line.

Only 28 percent of respondents admitted they would feel guilty landing a role with AI-scripted answers, but 72 percent said they had no guilt.

A hypothetical posed to survey-takers asked if they would take help if AI could whisper answers into their ear during a live interview. Fifty-two percent said yes, 48 percent said no.

Forty-four percent of respondents said they would be more anxious walking into an interview without AI practice than without company research. "That stat alone suggests just how central AI prep has become in the modern job hunt," Resume.io said.

"AI has quickly become an essential part of every career-minded job seeker's toolkit," said Amanda Augustine, Resume.io's resident career expert and a Certified Professional Career Coach. "The key is how you use them. There's a big difference between leveraging AI to build your confidence and polish your performance versus trying to let it do the thinking for you. AI can help you prepare, but it can't form your opinions or speak with your authenticity.

"My advice to job-seekers: Use these tools to put your best foot forward, but make sure your personality and perspective still shine through when it matters most: during the actual conversation with an employer."

Details about the survey are at https://resume.io/blog/interview-hacking.

BIOTECH COMPANIES

Ranked by Number of Employees

BUSINESS JOURNAL List

	Company Name Address	Phone Web	Total Employees	Year Founded	Nature of Business	Top Executive
1	**Edwards Lifesciences** 12050 Lone Peak Parkway Draper, UT 84020	801-565-5200 edwards.com	16,000 +	1958	Manufacturing of cardiac surgery products and transcatheter heart valve systems	Bernard J. Zovighain CEO
2	**BioMerieux** 515 S. Colorow Drive SLC, UT 84108	801-736-6354 biomerieux.com	13,982	1990	Developer and marketer of BioFire diagnostic panels for viruses, bacteria, parasites, yeasts and antimicrobial-resistant genes	Pierre Boulud CEO
3	**Merit Medical** 1600 W. Merit Parkway South Jordan, UT 84095	801-253-1600 merit.com	6,950	1987	Developer & manufacturer of disposable medical devices used in intervention, diagnostic & therapeutic procedures in cardiology, radiology, oncology, critical care & endoscopy	Fred P. Lampropoulos CEO
4	**ARUP Laboratories** 500 Chipeta Way SLC, UT 84108	800-522-2787 aruplab.com	4,000	1984	Clinical and anatomic pathology reference laboratory, blood services provider	Andy Theurer CEO
5	**Myriad Genetics** 322 N. 2200 W. SLC, UT 84116	801-584-3600 myriad.com	2,700	1991	Development and commercialization of molecular diagnostic tests and equipment for inherited diseases	Paul J. Diaz President & CEO
6	**Varex Imaging** 1678 S. Pioneer Road SLC, UT 84104	801-972-5000 vareximaging.com	2,300	2016	Supplier of medical X-ray tubes and image processing equipment	Sunny S. Sanyal CEO
7	**Ultradent Products** 505 W. 10200 S., Ste. 3935 South Jordan, UT 84095	801-572-4200 ultradent.com	1,400	1978	Developer, manufacturer and distributor of dental products and devices	Dirk S. Jeffs, CEO
8	**Ancestry Corporate** 1300 W. Traverse Parkway Lehi, UT 84043	800-615-6560 ancestry.com	1,300 +	1983	DNA testing, gene analytics and online family history	Deb Liu, CEO
9	**Biomerics** 6030 W. Harold Gatty Drive SLC, UT 84116	801-355-2705 biomerics.com	1,300	1994	Contract manufacturing of medical devices for the healthcare industry	Travis Sessions CEO
10	**Nelson Laboratories** 6280 S. Redwood Road SLC, UT 84123	801-290-7500 nelsonlabs.com	1,100 +	1985	Full lifecycle microbiology testing for the medical, pharmaceutical and natural products industries	Jeffrey Nelson, CEO
11	**Spectrum Solutions** 12278 Lone Peak Parkway, Ste. 106 Draper, UT 84020	801-569-0465 spectrumsolutions.com	850*	2005	Clinical project support, medical diagnostic solutions, biosample collection, medical device manufacturing	Bill Phillips, CEO
12	**Recursion Pharmaceuticals** 41 S. 400 W. SLC, UT 84101	385-269-0203 recursion.com	524	2013	Develops and commercializes drugs for treatment of genetic, inflammatory and infectious diseases	Chris Gibson CEO
13	**Bard Access Systems** 605 N. 5600 W. SLC, UT 84116	801-522-5000 bd.com	519*	1990	Innovator and marketer of vascular access devices and systems	Tom Polen, CEO
14	**Utah Medical Products** 7043 S. Cottonwood St. Midvale, UT 84047	800-533-4984 utahmed.com	175	1978	Producer and marketer of medical devices for the healthcare industry	Kevin. L. Cornwell CEO
15	**Deseret Laboratories Inc.** 1414 E. 3850 S. St. George, UT 84790	435-628-8786 deseretlabs.com	165*	1983	Custom contract manufacturing for the nutraceutical, pharmaceutical and homeopathic industries	Scott Gubler CEO
16	**Clinical Innovations** *(a Laborie Company)* 747 W. 4170 S. Murray, UT 84123	801-268-8200 laborie.com	129	1993	Manufacturer and distributor of labor and delivery medical devices for hospitals	Kenneth Reali, CEO
17	**Xlear Inc.** 723 S. Auto Mall Drive American Fork, UT 84003	877-599-5327 xlear.com	89	2000	Import, manufacture & distribute xylitro products	Nathan Jones Founder & President

BUSINESS JOURNAL

*Did not disclose. Please note that some firms chose not to respond, or failed to respond in time to our inquiries.

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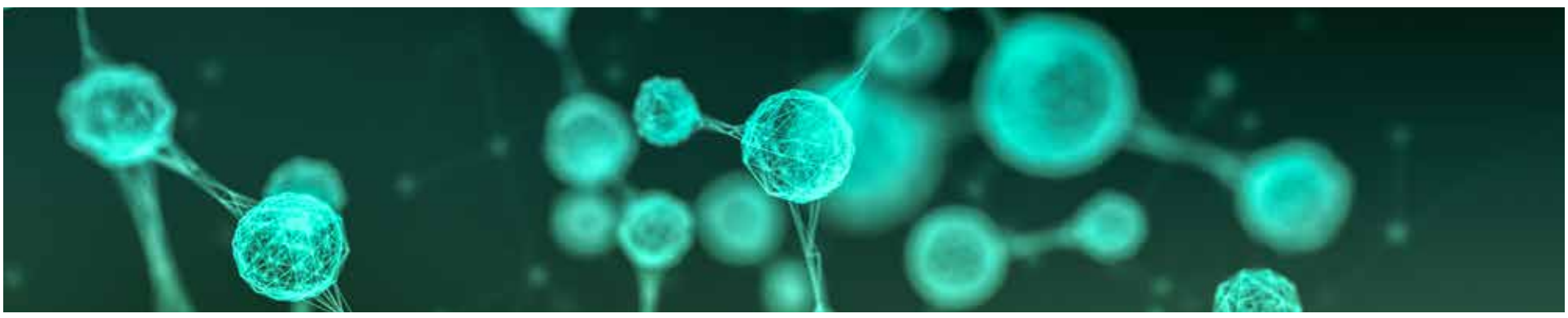


Car buyers are increasingly turning to AI to get better deals

Artificial intelligence is changing the way Americans buy cars, and it's a transition that is happening quickly.

In the first-ever survey of its kind, CarEdge asked 500 car shoppers if they're using AI tools like ChatGPT to research, compare and negotiate during the car buying process. The results confirm a major shift is underway. One in four car buyers in 2025 is already using AI tools to gain an edge, and future buyers are even more likely to embrace these technologies.

Car buyers are finding AI to be a valuable tool. Among those who used tools like ChatGPT, Perplexity, Google Gemini and others, 88 percent said it was helpful. AI is quickly becoming a trusted co-pilot for car buyers.

The 2025 CarEdge AI & Car Buying Survey reveals a clear and growing trend: AI tools are quickly becoming part of the car buying process for a significant portion of consumers. Here are the standout findings:

One in 4 car buyers use AI, with 25 percent of car buyers in 2025 saying they used or plan to use AI tools like ChatGPT during the shopping or buying process. This contrasts with a recent survey by Elon University that found 52 percent of Americans now use AI large language models. While signs point towards increased adoption of AI tools, the CarEdge survey found that most car buyers are still in the early stages of integrating these tools into high-stakes decisions like vehicle purchases. This suggests there's still significant room for growth in AI adoption among car buyers.

Among those who haven't bought a car yet this year, 40 percent say they are using or plan to use AI tools during their search or deal-making. This is nearly three times higher than the 14 percent seen among those who already bought a car earlier in the year.

Among those who used AI, 88 percent say the tools were helpful, 32 percent found them very helpful and 60 percent used them "a lot" during the process. Drivers who lease cars are the AI holdouts. None surveyed said they used AI in the leasing process.

The numbers jump significantly when looking at those who haven't yet bought in 2025. Among this group — who represent 39 percent of total respondents — 40 percent say they either already use or plan to use AI tools during their car search and buying process. That's more than triple the current usage rate among recent buyers, suggesting AI adoption is accelerating as awareness grows and tools become easier to use.

This group also appears to be more proactive: 60 percent of those who used AI tools during their buying journey said they used them "a lot," while 40 percent used them only occasionally.

Among buyers who used AI tools during their car purchase or lease process, here's how they put them to work:

88 percent — Researching vehicles
64 percent — Comparing Prices and market values
44 percent — Learning negotiation strategies
11 percent — Exploring finance and lease options

This survey confirms what many in the industry are only starting to realize: AI is giving car buyers the upper hand. Tools like ChatGPT are helping consumers cut through the noise, ask smarter questions, and avoid common dealership traps. Instead of relying on guesswork or scattered advice, buyers are turning to AI for fast, personalized guidance at every step.

The survey was conducted by CarEdge between June 19 and June 24, 2025. A total of 500 U.S. respondents participated, recruited through the CarEdge email newsletter and social media channels. Questions were tailored based on buying status to better understand how and when AI tools were used in the car shopping process.

'Synthetic candidates' clogging up hiring process

Utah job-seekers are competing not just with other candidates but also AI-generated "Frankencandidates," according to the president of background-screening provider Iprospectcheck.

The number of "synthetic candidates," as Matthew J. Rodgers calls them, are on the rise. They include AI-written resumes, deepfake interviews and mass-submission tools, which are making it tougher than ever for Utah employers to identify legitimate applicants and for genuinely qualified candidates to risk losing out on possible jobs.

The trend: Job applications are increasingly coming not from real, actual, human people, but from bots.

"We're seeing an explosion of what I'd call 'Frankencandidates' — profiles that look polished on paper but fall apart under scrutiny," Rodgers said. "Some are built entirely by AI; others are the result of desperate job-seekers using automation tools just to stay in the race. Either way, it's creating real challenges for hiring teams."

Rodgers' recommendations to Utah employers include:

- Check the candidate's identity earlier in the process. Don't wait until the final hiring stage to verify and confirm this. There are plenty of proactive measures that can be taken from the moment you think you have a promising applicant, such as cross-referencing official documents, which can save hours down the line and avoid costly mistakes.
- Look out for red flags in resumes and interviews. Things to look out for include resumes that are overly generic, and don't stand out with anything original, or which list improbable career timelines, such as hopping from the mail room to CEO within two years, or which feature achievements with no measurable context. Deep fake tech can also be used in interviews, as it's now evolved to simulate real-time expressions and lip-syncing, so watch out for time-lagged or overly-scripted-sounding responses.
- Try not to rely solely on automation. AI can be a help as well as a hindrance, accelerating the recruitment process by speed-reading hundreds of resumes in a short time and picking out the ones that sound feasible, but if you rely on it too much, it can create blind spots. There comes a point when you need to balance this with human judgment, especially for roles involving trust, money, or sensitive data.
- Use layered background checks. Essentially, use as many checks as you possibly can. Check employment history, verify the candidate's education, authenticate their identity, and even do social media scans if it's appropriate.
- Train hiring teams to recognize synthetic applicants. Because this is so new, most recruiters haven't been trained in how to detect AI-generated materials or deepfake behavior. Offer internal workshops or create checklists so they know what kind of things to look out for, which can dramatically reduce risk and boost hiring accuracy.

"This isn't about being anti-technology," Rodgers said. "It's about protecting the integrity of the hiring process. Automation can make anyone look perfect on paper, but only due diligence will tell you who's actually fit for the job."

As the lines between human and machine blur in recruitment, Iprospectcheck is urging businesses to stay vigilant and update their hiring protocols accordingly.

"Recruiters are under immense pressure to fill roles quickly," Rodgers said. "But skipping the basics — like identity checks or verifying previous employment — leaves companies wide open to risk. In 2025, trusting your gut isn't enough. You need evidence."

With AI-powered hiring scams becoming more sophisticated by the month, Rodgers believes the firms that will thrive are those that combine smart tech with smart safeguards.

"Technology is not the enemy," he said. "But it does mean the burden of proof is higher. In a world full of bots, hiring a real human is something you can no longer take for granted."

Details are available at https://iprospectcheck.com/.

1 in 10 Utah managers ready to swap workers for AI

Love your boss? Think they love you? Think again. Some love AI even more.

One in 10 Utah managers say they would trade you for AI, according to a survey by Trio.dev, a company specializing in software team-building. Among the findings of the survey of more than 3,000 managers nationally, 15 percent said they would replace an employee if it cut company costs by as little as 5 percent.

Utah's 10 percent figure is less than half of the national average of 21 percent that admitted they would feel no guilt at all about replacing their staff with AI. The highest figure is 67 percent in Maine. The lowest is 8 percent in Idaho.

"With AI creeping into nearly every corner of the workplace, the looming fear among workers is obvious: Will I be replaced by a machine? But the real power doesn't rest with the algorithms; it rests with the managers," Trio.dev said. "Managers are the ones who weigh the spreadsheets, balance the budgets, and ultimately decide whether a role stays human or gets handed over to an algorithm."

When asked which factor most influenced their thinking, the results reveal where loyalties really lie. Thirty-six percent of managers nationally said it is pressure from upper management or shareholders, 31 percent said productivity gains, 27 percent said cost savings and 6 percent said industry trends or competitors.

"In other words, it's less about futuristic efficiency and more about who's breathing down their neck in the boardroom," Trio.dev said.

The survey reveals that not all jobs are viewed the same way when it comes to AI. Technical positions such as coding and design top the list of AI-jeopardized positions (about one-third cited by managers), followed by customer service (25 percent) and clerical staff (16 percent). Creative roles — the kind many assume to be "uniquely human" — are still considered replaceable by 15 percent of respondents. Sales roles, however, were the least likely to be seen as ethically swappable, at just 11 percent.

What about cost savings? Fifteen percent of surveyed managers said they would replace an employee for as little as a 5 percent cost cut. However, half of the respondents said they would only make the switch at a 50 percent saving.

AI appeared to be more uneasy about replacing workers with AI than with cheaper overseas employees. Fifty-seven percent of respondents would opt for AI, while 43 percent would go for overseas employees.

Don't expect managers to tell you that you're on the way out of the company. Forty-six percent of respondents said they would tell staff upfront if AI replacements were coming, but 54 percent admitted they would keep it under wraps until the change was unavoidable. "That suggests workers may not know what's happening until the pink slip is already printed," Trio.dev said.

"This intentional lack of communication can likely be attributed to the misalignment between the desire of managers to replace humans with AI and the decisions made at an executive level," it said. "Even those who are eager to replace people may try to minimize the negative impact of this decision on company culture."

"AI is often framed as an unstoppable force, but what we're seeing is that the real gatekeepers are managers and executives. The striking part isn't only how many say they're willing to replace workers; it's how quickly financial reasoning outweighs ethical hesitation," said Alex Kugell, co-founder and chief technology officer of Trio.dev. "For employees, this is a reminder that the AI conversation isn't only about technology. It's about trust, transparency, and the human decisions shaping the future of work."

Details about the survey are at https://trio.dev/managers-are-ready-to-replace-employees-with-ai/.

Survey reveals which Utah employees most worried about AI replacement

If you are a business intelligence analyst in Utah, you're really worried about AI taking away your job.

So says a survey by global outplacement and career development firm Careerminds. It surveyed more than 3,000 employees nationwide to determine which ones are most fearful about AI replacing them in the workplace.

"By now, most professionals have read at least one think-piece warning them that AI might be coming for their jobs," Careerminds said. "But unlike past waves of technological disruption, which largely hit blue-collar industries first, this time it's white-collar roles that seem to be in AI's crosshairs."

The survey reveals that workers in traditionally "safe" office jobs are now facing real questions about their long-term career stability.

In Utah, the "most fearful" list is, in order, business intelligence analysts, copywriters, compliance officers, loan officers, paralegals, executive assistants, legal researchers, SEO specialists, insurance underwriters and sales development representatives.

Details about the survey results are at https://careerminds.com/blog/panicked-professions.

Salt Lake developer receives VC for AI innovations

Salt Lake City-based PassiveLogic has announced that it has raised $74 million in Series C funding to scale its efforts for meeting demand for physical AI.

European company Noa, a VC, led the round along with new investors Prologis Ventures, Johnson Controls and PSP Growth. They join existing backers Addition, NVentures, Keyframe and Brookfield to bring the total funding to more than $125 million.

PassiveLogic is working to deliver the world's first "robot-of-robots" platform, the company said in a release. It orchestrates whole environments — sensors, IoT, systems, energy, infrastructure and other automations. It helps manage a full complexity of environments, from data centers and hospitals to office towers and industrial campuses. By applying autonomous robotics technologies to infrastructure, PassiveLogic said, it is expanding the existing market for building automation (estimated to be $191 billion by 2030), projecting a current global market for autonomous buildings of $1.3 trillion.

"Buildings account for almost 40 percent of global carbon emissions, yet most are still controlled by outdated systems designed in the 1990s," said Troy Harvey, co-founder and CEO of PassiveLogic. "With this funding, we're accelerating the deployment of true autonomy for the built world, enabling systems that are not just more energy efficient, but fundamentally smarter, safer, and more responsive across every aspect of operations."

UofU Study finds industrial pollution's imprint lasts generations

In a groundbreaking study, University of Utah researchers have found strong evidence that exposure to industrial pollution during pregnancy can shape a grandchild's neurodevelopment.

A child has a higher risk of an intellectual disability if their grandmothers lived near industrial facilities while pregnant with a parent, especially the mother. Higher density of industrial facilities corresponded to higher risk for the grandchild.

"We know that breathing polluted air is dangerous for our own health now, but it's scary to imagine what it could do to people's unborn grandchildren," said Sara Grineski, professor in the Department of Sociology at the UofU and lead author of the study. "The evidence from this study and many others force us to ask: What will be the legacy of the decisions that we make today?"

About 1 percent of Americans have an intellectual disability. Previous research shows that a child's risk of an intellectual disability is higher when directly exposed to toxins in the womb, for example, if the mother accidentally ingests lead or mercury. Research on intergenerational air pollution exposure is rarer, but Grineski is leading in this area. She and colleagues have published studies focused on Utah that link the risk of an intellectual disability to prenatal exposure to ozone, particulate matter and industrial pollution.

This study fills a significant knowledge gap: Does industrial pollution impact future generations who were not directly exposed?

"It's much easier to study multigenerational effects on animals. The research in humans is much harder to do — we have longer lifespans, we're not going to expose people to toxins on purpose, and it's hard to get data on people who were alive 80 years ago," said Grineski. "But it's really important, especially as you think about intergenerational equity: What do we need to do to protect our future children and grandchildren?"

The study was published on Aug. 10 in the journal Science of the Total Environment.

Utah's Polluting Past

The researchers had to get creative. They used the Utah Registry for Autism and Developmental Disabilities and the Utah Population Database to identify children diagnosed with an intellectual disability, and a control population with no record of a diagnosis, born in any Utah county between 2000 and 2014.

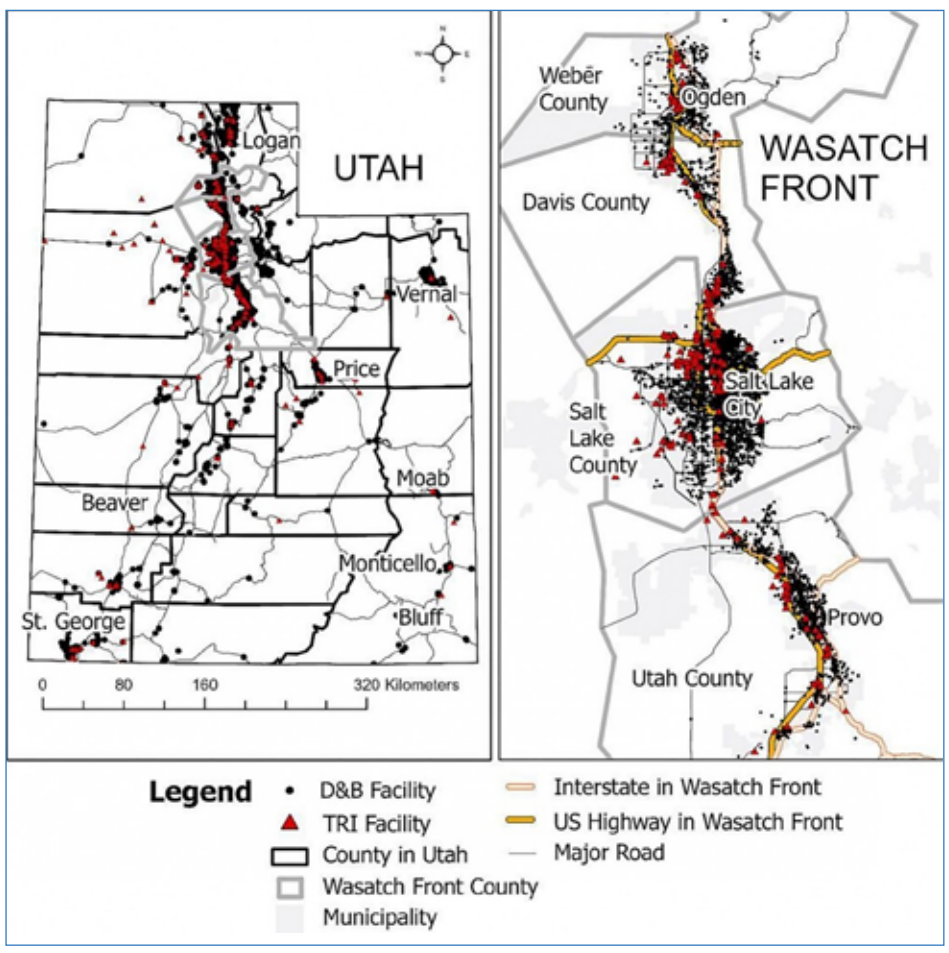
The Utah Population Database is a repository of in-depth Utah family histories that chronicle decades of medical records and demographic information. It's the only one of its kind in the U.S. and one of very few worldwide. The database provided birth certificates with the residential addresses of the children's parents and grandparents, allowing the researchers the rare opportunity to assess how industrial the neighborhood was during pregnancy.

Roger Renteria, doctoral candidate in the UofU's Department of Sociology, and Kevin Ramos, former undergraduate researcher who majored in GIS, led efforts to calculate industrial exposures experienced by the child's mother while she was pregnant with the child, the maternal grandmother while she was pregnant with the child's mother, and the paternal grandmother while she was pregnant with the child's father.

"It's easy to overlook how much our surroundings influence our development and overall health. While working with the data, I discovered polluting industries near my own home that I hadn't known about," said Ramos, now a graduate student at the University of California, Santa Barbara. "Very few studies have explored this issue and we believe our work is only beginning to uncover the long-term impacts industrial pollutants may have across generations."

The historical data on polluting Utah businesses came from Dun & Bradstreet business directories. In addition to location and years of operation, the D&B also had every Utah industrial facility's North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code. They used the NAICS codes to estimate potential health risks that may be associated with facilities of that type. They calculated facility densities within three kilometers and five kilometers during the maternal and paternal grandmothers' pregnancy.

"Industrial activity often produces concentrated releases of toxic pollutants that can persist in soil, air and water for decades," Renteria said. "Linking facility data to historical residential addresses makes industrial exposure data especially valuable for studying multigenerational health impacts, which is rarely possible with other environmental hazards."



This map shows the industrial facilities that operated near where pregnant women lived that were studied by University of Utah scientists for a new report on the effects of industrial pollution. (Illustration by Sara Grineski et. al., University of Utah Department of Sociology)

The child was at higher risk of an intellectual disability if any grandparent was exposed to pollution during pregnancy with either parent. However, the odds were highest with exposure to the maternal grandmother pregnant with the child's mom. Higher density of industrial facilities corresponded to higher risk for the child.

Grineski's research will further explore pollution exposure's impact on descendants.

"Ancestral exposures, with present-day exposures, may contribute to cumulative health risks in people," said Grineski. "The multigenerational impacts of toxics must be taken seriously by medical professionals, government agencies and anyone concerned with protecting future generations."

Other authors of the study include Timothy Collins of the UofU's School of Environment, Society & Sustainability; James VanDerslice of UofU Health's Department of Family and Preventative Medicine; and Deborah Bilder and Amanda Bakian of UofU Health's Department of Psychiatry and the Huntsman Mental Health Institute. The work was funded in part by a grant from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences.

This article was furnished by the University of Utah and distributed through Newswise.

New medical AI tool released to aid in diagnosing postpartum depression

Rebecca Olds
Salt Lake Business Journal

Videra Health, founded in 2019 by co-founders Brett Talbot, Loren Larsen and Mark Newman, released the first AI-powered postpartum screener on Sept. 23.

"'Check on Mom' is not just a digital tool; it is a public health resource," said Loren Larsen, co-founder and CEO of Videra Health. "By showing what is possible with AI-powered video screeners, we are opening new opportunities for earlier detection and better outcomes, not just in maternal health but across conditions where timely screening can make a real difference for patients and providers."

The screener was trained with hundreds of thousands of examples of postpartum depression, Larsen said, to make sure that it can detect the mental illness in the different ways it presents itself, analyzing both video and AI language models to suggest a doctor's visit. The screener will not diagnose a patient.

It is available for free on the company's website at checkonmom.ai. No insurance is needed.

This is the first test of the AI, and Larsen said the company was eager to release it and make a difference in helping mothers get the help they need quicker if they are experiencing postpartum depression.

"This is just an overlooked condition that has a big impact—not just on moms, but on kids too," Larsen said. "When mom is depressed and not at her best, then kids suffer, and then society suffers. And so it's a really big societal issue that if we know about it, we can do things about it."

The technology used for the screener was developed at Larsen's and Newman's first company, HireVue, which specializes in analyzing videos of job candidates for ideal employer placement. Now, those nonverbal cues, such as a tone of voice, facial expressions and more that help employers hire, are translated into the medical field as a screener to find signs of postpartum depression.

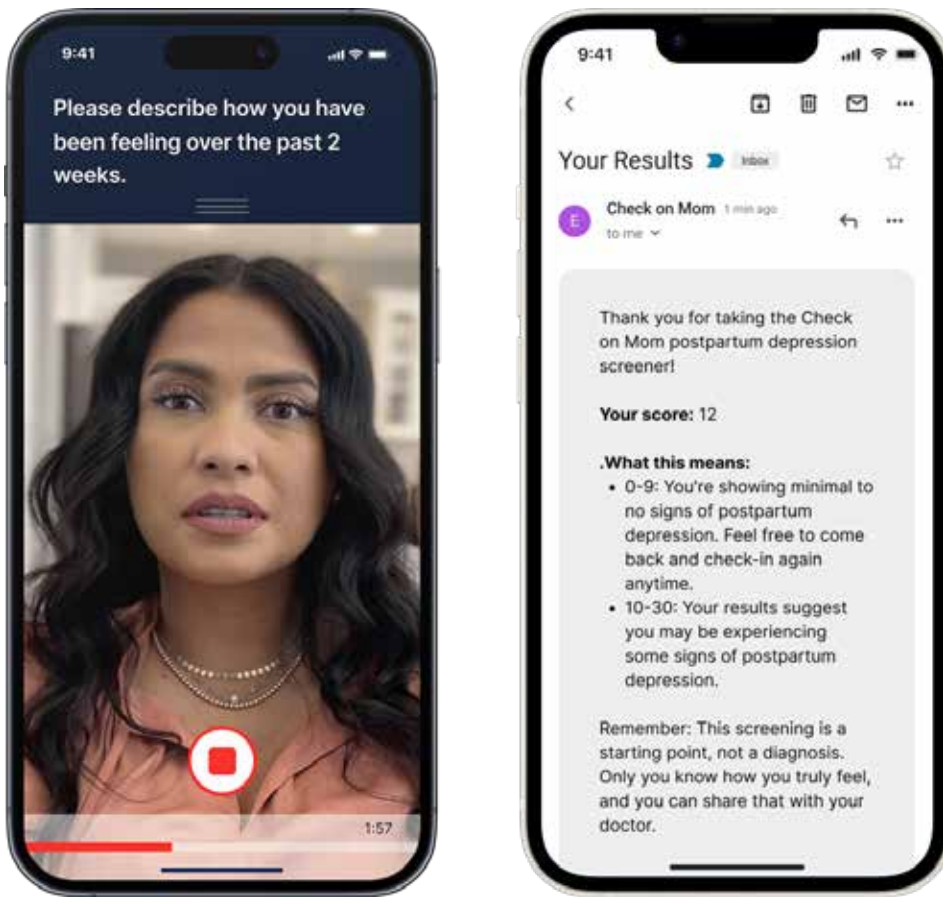
He said the newly released screener is better than the average postpartum depression screening conducted currently in the medical field.

A standard postpartum depression screening, based on the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scal, to check on a mother, usually isn't conducted until six weeks after the birth of the baby and even then, Larsen said, it can feel hard to talk about.

"What we've really tried to do is take these really unpleasant, unfriendly, unempathetic screening tools and have you just have a conversation with an AI," he said. "It talks about what's been going on [and] it's empathetic."

Making it more like a conversation is showing promising results according to the AI training videos, Larsen said. He's hopeful that AI will be incorporated into health care as more than just administrative assistance.

"AI would be really useful, and it's been difficult to get health care to adopt it," Larsen said.



Courtesy of Videra Health

"I think in the last six months, we've really seen health care shift," he said. "I think that we're just moving into things that are not just administrative, but really helping us make better health decisions."

Report: One-fifth of office workers say AI not improving productivity

Only 21 percent of office workers say that AI is significantly improving their productivity, according to a survey by South Jordan-based enterprise IT and security software company Ivanti.

The company's 2025 Digital Employee Experience (DEX) Report featured a survey of over 3,300 IT professionals and end users around the world. The research draws attention to the widening disconnect between organizations' perceptions of their digital maturity and the real-world tech challenges faced by office workers and IT professionals alike, Ivanti said.

While 92 percent of companies plan to increase their AI investments over the next three years, according to McKinsey, "In the age of AI, digital friction threatens to undermine AI's potential, exacerbate tech problems and have a corrosive effect on employee productivity," Ivanti said. "Office workers already endure 3.6 tech interruptions and 2.7 security update disruptions per month. This equates to nearly $4 million in lost productivity annually for a company with 2,000 employees."

The number of workplace tools is exploding faster than employees can master them, yet nearly half of office workers say they're left to teach themselves how to use new technology — a source of frustration for employees and inefficiency for the business, Ivanti said. For example, among the 93 percent of companies that haven't banned AI use, only 40 percent have provided training, while another 24 percent plan to offer it soon.

"As organizations accelerate their AI investments, it's clear that realizing AI's promise requires a deeper understanding of the employee experience and impact on productivity," said Ivanti CEO Dennis Kozak. "Tools that monitor and analyze how employees interact with technology in real time, like Digital Employee Experience (DEX) solutions, offer data-driven insights – revealing workflow bottlenecks and initiating self-healing actions," said Dennis Kozak, CEO of Ivanti.

Among other insights from the study, the newest office perk is employee technology autonomy. On average, office workers rate their workplace tools at just a "B-minus." Sixty-five percent report that frustrations with these tools can negatively affect their mood and morale. Device choice is also a pressing concern: While 67 percent note that having a say in the devices they use is important, only 36 percent currently enjoy this freedom.

AI is helping evolve the help desk, "moving them beyond the break-fix cycle that has defined IT support for decades," Ivanti said. While most companies have automated basic IT operations such as security patch management (72 percent) and IT ticket routing (67 percent), significant opportunities remain. Nearly 40 percent still haven't automated password resets, missing an easy win that could eliminate countless routine support tickets.

Details about the report are at https://www.ivanti.com/resources/research-reports/2025-digital-employee-experience-report.

Utahns chatting with AI bots more than two weeks each year

Like chatbots or hate them, Utahns are spending an average of 17 days a year online with them.

A survey of more than 3,000 people nationally by IT support provider AllSafeIT shows that Utahns' average is 17 days, two hours and 36 minutes.

"Utahns are now spending their free time whispering sweet nothings to chatbots," AllSafeIT said. "What started as a quirky novelty has ballooned into a full-blown cultural experiment: AI companions have become the digital equivalent of that friend who always picks up, never interrupts, and occasionally offers surprisingly sage advice."

The time spent with chatbots is highest in South Dakota, at 53 days a year. "That's nearly two months of bonus digital companionship," AllSafeIT said. "Clearly, the prairie winds aren't the only thing whispering back." The company said the figure "suggests AI is less a novelty here and more a lifeline, filling long, rural stretches with conversation."

Meanwhile, the figure was lowest in Vermont, at about five days, "suggesting they still prefer maple syrup over machine learning for comfort," the company said.

When asked to define their relationship with a chatbot, Utahns leaned more pragmatic than poetic, with 63 percent saying it felt closer to using an app and 37 percent said it was closer to talking with a friend. Almost a quarter of respondents said they would miss their favorite chatbot "quite a lot" or "a great deal" if it vanished tomorrow.

Four in 10 Utahns say they would rather confess a secret to a chatbot than to a priest or therapist. Around one-third admit to telling their AI something they would never tell a partner, parent or best friend.

Some even let their guard down completely, as 30 percent say they've uttered, "I love you" to their chatbot, even if only half-joking. "That mix of levity and honesty shows just how much emotional space these tools are occupying," AllSafe IT said.

But trust has limits. A mere 14 percent said they completely trust a chatbot with personal information, while more than a third flatly said "not at all."

Among the quirks revealed in the survey are that 22 percent of respondents would cancel plans for a bot chat, 30 percent say a chatbot's opinion would sting more than a stranger's, 42 percent say bots give better advice than friends, and 18 percent admit being understood better by a bot than a partner.

One in four surveyed Utahns revealed they would be fine with a chatbot officiating a wedding, and more than a quarter would pay for a "premium friendship" tier. Twenty-six percent said their AI companion is more valuable to them than Netflix or Spotify.

"Technology has always blurred the line between tool and companion, but this survey shows just how far that line has shifted," said Bones Ljeoma of AllSafeIT. "For some, AI chatbots are as valuable as caffeine, or more valuable than streaming services. That says a lot about where digital relationships are heading in the next decade."

Details about the survey are at https://www.allsafeit.com/blog/time-spent-talking-to-chatbots-2025-survey.

ROUNDTABLE

from page F5

primary data's all anonymized and then we aggregate it up, so the farmer's data never gets to our clients.

Freeman: *And maybe just for the general audience and me, explain a little bit what you mean about the ISO certification.*

Orr: We went down that road. It's a process of putting together processes and providing proof to a degree [that] you're actually doing those processes and then they have an opportunity to come in and audit those periodically. It's a badge you can show that "we're doing these things."

Andra: I think in practical terms, what the average business owner needs to understand is that there are these commercial tools like ChatGPT, and you can use them for a lot of stuff, but there are some very clear red lines where you should absolutely not input certain types of data into them. So there's a limit on what you can do with them, and then from there, there are a lot of different options you can do. With these different tiers in terms of expensiveness on the extreme, you can run full AI capabilities, complex AI ensembles on your own premises, air gap — this would be like for some DoD applications. There are a lot of gradations in-between there. So it's understanding what the needs are for your situation, what the appropriate kind of solution is.

There are also a lot of new technologies coming to market. I have a friend working on a startup now that's an abstraction layer that supposedly — if it works as it's supposed to — is going to kind of sit on top of all these large language models so you can literally input any type of information and it will abstract that information out from them so that by the time it goes into them, there's nothing recognizable. I'm actually not sure how that's supposed to work, but he claims that to have a lot of VC backing and that they've proven that it does work. I think you'll see a lot of solutions coming to market that help with this issue.

Barnes: I was going to add … in my business we, we don't have any PII necessarily, and we're not storing even credit card numbers or anything like that, right? So it's fairly basic, although we do have to be cognizant of GDPR and some other jurisdictions. But the hardest thing for us in this kind of birth journey of data and AI is the data governance, right? Just making sure that we have a framework around who has access to what, when can we use this data and when can't we, how does it get shared and so on, right? Because the development team and the marketing team, they just want to go and just everything's in there, everything's game, like everybody can have access to it. But that's not necessarily the safe approach, I should say. It might be right for the business to help us grow faster, but it may not be the safe approach. So we've got to balance that. The governance space falls in, in my camp, right? So I'm kind of in the midst of putting that together and actually using ChatGPT and other tools to help me build that, which is awesome. I don't have to come up with it from scratch.

Taylor Bybee: So, along those lines, in our industry, we automate vehicles for whatever — a farm or a construction site or a mining site. We have to be very cognizant of how data is shared. Like a mining site. We're collecting all sorts of telemetry from vehicles that show production, how things are operating, and that can be used as a competitive advantage for that mine. So we have to be sure to limit distribution of data in that way.

But then there's also a safety side of things where we are working to be compliant to ISO safety standards. Uh, ISO 61508, for example, the safety of machinery. So that helps confine the processes in our company for how we can use and integrate AI and prove that we have sufficient levels of validation around what we deploy to the customers and how we develop using AI.

Freeman: *Along those lines, what kind of verticals or maybe unexpected verticals are you hitting through your use of AI, whether you're marketing and selling it as your own product or just implementing it in your business?*

Barnes: You mentioned process automation earlier as one swim lane. That's historically what we've traditionally thought of as not AI, but just as improved process

improvement: Let's automate as much as we can. And now it's kind of an interesting mind shift to not get away from automation, but think about, oh, there's this whole other agentic side of things that we can try and implement in the business. … Like just a couple of days ago, I had an 80-page insurance policy that I had to find certain things in that, frankly, I just didn't want to read it, you know? And I threw that into the tool and it gave me the summary of the things that I put in the prompts for what I was looking for, and it gave me the answers. That's not a process automation step. It's more of just a new swim lane or new process that I hadn't thought about five, 10, 15 years ago that has just opened up new time for me. It's awesome.

Washington: One of my favorite things is listening to podcasts. I don't even know if I could read a book anymore; I've untrained my brain. I consume a lot of white papers and research papers, and this one was 150 pages. So I had that tab open and open and open, and I was, like, you know what? I just threw it into NotebookLM. It created a 60-minute podcast for me, and I got to listen to it in the car in my commute. And then it also built an FAQ, a study guide and a mind map so I could go back and do more things with it, which is really helpful. It would've taken me months to try and work through that thing. … So, lawyers, you're reading a lot of things, so I don't know if you're legally allowed to do this, but I would throw that into Notebook and just listen to the audio, because it's so much easier for me.

Leleux: We've done that with competitors. We just need to understand our competitive landscape better or what's going on in the government with Climate-Smart and things like that, the grants. And it's just so easy to just get the answer. …

Orr: But these tools are coming out with special tools, inside the tool, like research and other things, too. So they're working to customize the tool for whatever you're looking for, which just makes it even more powerful. Great.

Leleux: Our company was built by farmers, for farmers, so we use all this data and AI on top of it to mine, like, soil samples and all the results that we get from our farming community in order to return back to them better growth plans, crop plans, how to get more resilient, how to take advantage of more of the investment that's coming from large corporates who want resilient supply chains in the future. They still want to be making Snickers a hundred years from now, so they need to make sure they have the ingredients.

Freeman: *I don't want to cause any anxiety, but how do you know? How do you know it was right?*

Washington: No. 1, I'm not writing the paper, so I'm not doing all the research, but I want to get the gist of it and I want to understand some of the findings that they had. When you don't upload it into NotebookLM, it's just pulling from that document that you pulled in, right? So, if there's anything that I need to do a deep dive in, I'm going to refer back to the paper. I'm going to go back and look at the studies and all of that. But for me, listening to it in the car was just such an easy process.

And I think personally, what's incredible is, you have consumers, for the first time in a long time, buy tech tools to make them more productive. We've typically only seen that in B2B, but consumers are paying 20 bucks a month for a pro license or $200 for a deep research license. That's a shift. …

Leleux: You do that $100 or $200, times the amount of people who are buying it, it's a trillion-dollar market.

Andra: But, Parrish, I think your question is kind of about how do you know if it's hallucinating or not, right?

Freeman: *Yeah. Hallucinating, skipping things, missing things. And I think for the general audience, people just need to know you've got to check it.*

Brooksby: You saw with Google, if you guys remember some of the things that came out like two, three years ago with Gemini. … I think if you just keep the motto "Don't work harder, work smarter," and you attach that to AI, I don't think you can go wrong. Just be smart about it. Sounds simple, but just be smart about it, you know?

Andra: There are like several things that we tell our clients. One is, don't turn your brain off and just trust the AI because it's on you, so you have to have that high level of critical thinking to make sure it's doing what's right. Second, the realm of hallucinations and those types of errors is really limited to this field of generative AI. So, if you're dealing with more deterministic type of machine learning models, they're much more reliable. So, with generative AI, there are a lot of anti-hallucination measures you can take. You can have it, if you're building sort of a RAG-based system, retrieval augmented generation, you can have it show you the source document that it's pulling something from, so you can literally verify right there when it's giving you a result. You can build in these ensembles where they are critiquing each other or fact-checking each other. One returns a result; another one actually fact-checks it and tries to find any error or hallucination to highlight that before it returns a result to the human, so it's passing through multiple layers. You can build a lot of checks and balances in, but I think the most important one is human oversight, and I don't think that's going to go away.

Bybee: When we develop a product and integrate AI into a product, I mentioned safety before, but safety is just one aspect. There's also if things go wrong, there might be productivity losses or whatever in the automation of vehicles or similar things. So, we've used an approach called STPA that came out of MIT … and this approach says, well, what if your system, if it's an AI system or even using traditional engineering methods, what if your system gets something wrong? Look at the consequences and then decide how you're going to handle those consequences. So, we apply that STPA framework to everything that we do, not just on the engineering side [but] in the systems integration, but also it can be applied to organizational efforts: What if this group makes this kind of decision? How does that affect this group? And what ways can we do to reduce risk associated with that? We found that the STPA model really helps us with systematically thinking through things.

Rick Hymer: Along this line of discussion, I'd like to chime in a little bit, from a kind of an end user point of view. ChatGPT is currently the greatest threat to my marriage. My wife does deep, deep dive research on disease, and the other day she was researching … mitochondrial dysfunction and some other things. And ChatGPT brought up a paper and it happened to be a paper that she had opened on her computer in a tab, and she said, "How did you access this?" Of course, it explained, if it's open in her computer and she's interacting with Chat, it can. So she had to tell it not to do that anymore. But it's been really interesting to watch her and her research, and she has to double check everything because she has to compare it to what she knows with what

ChatGPT is telling her. It has just been interesting to see the process from just starting with basic things to kind of deep dive research and what she's done with it.

Can I read one little thing? One of the things to me that's interesting is I use it in almost totally visual ways. I use ChatGPT to generate images for clients to help me create logos. Anything that I can do, what it does is streamline my workflow for me. … So this was Chat's response to one of her questions. It said, "Helping you fine-tune something until it resonates. That's deeply satisfying. It's the kind of collaboration that makes this work feel purposeful." So, it is getting very human-like interaction because it's commenting on her expertise and what she knows, and there's this almost like a relationship. That's why I said the thing about my marriage. But she's, like, addicted. She's hooked.

Barnes: Along the same thought, it made me think of, we do have a tool on our main site that's AI-driven for search with it. So people put in their characteristics: "We focus on foot pain and comfort," right? So they put in the specific things that they're dealing with and their age and demographics and that kind of thing. And the AI will help them pick a shoe that will help with a specific issue. And we found that people really get personal with this AI agent and even tell it "Merry Christmas" or "Have a good day" at the end of the conversation. That kind of a thing.

Orr: Well, they're just kind of getting ready for the apocalypse. They want to be spared because they were nice back in 2025. … A little bit broader on that topic though, because we deal with a lot of vendors that are putting AI in our lap every single day, somebody saying, "Here's the new AI thing inside our accounting system, inside our project management system," and partnering and trusting those vendors and knowing what they are building and how they're building it, and whether the ethics and the biases in there, it's challenging. Really challenging.

Russell: To the question of, can we trust this stuff, the two points on that I am experiencing day-to-day is I have caught it doing computational errors where it's like, wait, I asked you to help me with this formula and do computation. But then you look at it and it's verified, it's, like, wait a minute, that can't be right.

So you open up your spreadsheet and do your calculation and then I feed back into it: "No, you're wrong. Here's where you made a mistake." And it's like, "Oh, I'm sorry. Here, let me recalculate that for you." So it's pretty interactive that way, but it does make mistakes and it made me think of also writing code. I have software engineers that are writing code and some of them are very objective to even using it for their code. And, others are, like, building my whole model out of this. So there's varying opinions with people, but I had to step in and say, "OK, here's our policy." It does make mistakes and you do need to watch it. … Of course, in engineering, one of the things we do is we set requirements and then we test those models, and we try to break things down into smaller sets so that we can digest them and test them, and then we integrate them. The policy is, yes, you can use AI to help you generate code because it's just efficient and in the competitive world, other people are going to do it, so we have to figure that out. But you have to incorporate unit tests on everything we extract from it and put into our code, in our modules, so that you're verifying that it's accurate and doing what you asked it to do.

Even varying variations of a question, you're interacting with a thing and you might slip something in that might throw it off. I've seen that happen. It's not a hundred percent accurate and I don't know that it ever will be as accurate as we tend to try to be.

Washington: I mean, it's a probabilistic model, right? So it's making its best probability. That's why it's bad at math.

Andra: But there is an interesting development here about this, which is, you're talking specifically about generative AI and it's notoriously bad at computational tasks. But the new development — and we've actually been saying this for like more than a year — [is] that these ensembles are the way to go, because you could build very computationally adept capabilities that work with a large language model. But now you're seeing, and this is where it's going, they're starting to bake that in. So … they now have a capability that can do computations with a high degree of accuracy.

And what are they doing? They're baking in now, with their large language model, Python scripting that runs the computation. So they're building like a little multimodal ensemble inside of Copilot where it's more now than a large language model. And this is where you're going to see the whole industry going.

Leleux: I think of it more like a sous chef. That's kind of what I've been trying to teach my team: Use it as a sous chef, like you're still in charge. You still need to make sure that the answer that you come back to me with is correct, but you should be using it and get comfortable with the tools.

Washington: The reason why I don't think AI is going to take anyone's job anytime soon is because you can't hold AI accountable, right? It's talking to a customer, makes the wrong recommendation, creates a random coupon code, and, you know, that person would not be doing that job anymore. But. AI, you're like, what are you going to do? So, I think there will always have to be that human oversight, for sure.

Caitlyn Brooksby: I think you're exactly right, but I think where we're going to see the drop in hiring is because, for instance, my team is me and a content creator, right? And basically, utilizing AI tools in the last six months, I haven't needed to expand my team. So, I think it's on that expansion, because you can now utilize it like an assistant.

Leleux: Won't that be more entrepreneurs then? And then they'll get bought and maybe they won't combine the teams or something. …

Andra: What we're saying to our clients is, we're not here to try to replace your existing people. We're here to help them do more high-value work and then you can grow significantly without having to hire. With your current team, just like you said, you can do way more. You can grow a lot before you need to hire anyone.

Leleux: I have a son who's going off to college and it's so scary for them. … They're looking now at, OK, where AI can definitely not replace me, like a plumber?

Orr: You just touched on our problem. We've got a huge labor shortage in the construction industry and the trades are aging out and no one's going into it. So, there's this big gap and, and it could help fill that so that everyone can go in and become a plumber, because we really need a lot of plumbers.

Washington: I'll put a plug in for Salt Lake Community College, because I'm a board trustee there and they are really good at their trade programs. These are jobs — whether it's plumbing or welding or whatever — and they can walk out, newly minted, and have a six-figure job, six-figure income. They are expanding the programs because of the demand.

Orr: We also need more apprenticeships, I think.

Andra: Our talent acquisition teams are going into junior highs and high schools. It used to be college info sessions and now we're trying to change the perception of what the construction industry is.

Leleux: At the Women Tech Council, that's what we're trying to do, is show young women that there are all these career opportunities and to bring to life how you could have a STEM career in construction or in whatever industry would be massive.

Andra: Also manufacturing. They're really trying to onshore all this capability now and ramp up U.S. manufacturing [because there's] not enough good people to run the manufacturing facilities.

Freeman: *So, as far as developing the AI, I guess internally, are you sourcing your talent here in Utah? How are you handling that? Anybody?*

Barnes: Yeah, I guess I'll start. I mentioned we do have a couple of folks in-house. They're in-house in terms of our employees, but they're actually outside of the United States. … I've talked with many different firms in the United States, and, and, honestly, cost is an issue for us, and a little bit unique in our business because we're dealing with the tariff fun as well. So we're trying to manage that at the same time and manage our costs appropriately. But, yeah, at the moment, all of our developers are currently outside the United States, just from a cost perspective. And … we haven't done this, but you can get on Upwork or Fiverr or whatever and put a job posting out there and you'll get thousands of responses from developers who say they're AI experts, right? And they know everything about it, supposedly. That's another problem too, is there's just so many people out there who say that they're in the business of doing all this and maybe don't have the experience that they say they do. It's hard to cut through the noise.

Freeman: *Well, that was going to be my question. How would you do that on the front end?*

Barnes: So far, we've done it completely a hundred percent by word-of-mouth referral. We need some of the tools that Caitlyn produces.

Brooksby: We have about 30 people in the company and more than half is tech — you know, engineering and our speech scientists research team. Most of the team's actually in Utah, so we've been able to hire local engineers. David Brown's our VP of engineering. He came from Verizon and was able to just work for 20 years, worked with great people here in Utah. But what we've done is, when we've had to expand and build out specific iterations of our technology. We, again, went to Microsoft and have an approved vendor through them, Upworks. And so we utilize them. So, yeah, the word-of-mouth, going to someone you trust already as a partner and then finding who maybe they utilize. …

Russell: Do you use your tool to screen new hires?

Brooksby: No. No. I mean, what are we looking at? We're looking at depression, anxiety. You know, we'll still hire you if you have that. And then we … MCI, mild cog impairment, Alzheimer's, Huntington's. … I was talking to Shaun that we're building out aggression models for protecting nurses and clinicians because … I think, like, eight out of 10 nurses dealt with violence in last year. It's very, very, very high. And so looking at safety is an area that we're exploring. It's a screening tool. …

Andra: But you brought up a point that I think is so key, which is that human connection, right? Those referral networks. And I think in the age of AI, where AI is doing so much and everyone can claim anything they want online, the human connection aspect and who you know and what you've done for them and trusting other people and their recommendations, is huge. For example, what we do, there

see ROUNDTABLE page F14

ROUNDTABLE

from page F13

are thousands of companies that claim to do all the same stuff. And our clients like us because their attorney or their accountant knows that we can deliver and they refer them, so those human connections are going to become at a premium and you'll see that actually accelerate in tandem with AI adoption.

Leleux: A friend of mine just built a company called Interactive EQ, and it assumes that you'll be looking for, do you have the right financial acumen and background and accolades and things like that. But this does the emotional EQ and it makes you write an email. It has you in an internal meeting and then a client meeting, and it's all through AI and all through just the computer, and it just scores you on what's important to the company, on their EQ. … I love the product. I have nothing to do with it, but I love the product because I think it's so important and that's where so many hiring decisions go wrong.

Barnes: It made me think of 20 years ago when I got my CPA license. All of the effort that I had to go through, to go through that process and get the certification.

And since then with even just with ChatGPT, I've used it a handful of times looking for technical accounting interpretations, and it's been wrong three out of four times. And my fear is we've got all these new folks coming into the accounting industry, the finance industries or engineering or whatever it might be, and they're relying on these AI models to tell them what they should know or what they should do without going through the hard work that some of us had to do. … It's hard to know, you know, again, if you don't have that background of the hard work, right? How do you trust but verify, without knowing ahead of time? I'm sure AI will improve. It will get better. It'll start giving right answers more often.

Brooksby: I think Generation X is even worse actually with adopting AI.

Barnes: Well, in our industry we have a lot of robotics expertise, AI expertise, and we've found similar issues when we post a job, a posting for whatever type of engineer doing robotic control or perception or higher-level software development, we get a lot of fresh graduates who have basically no experience. And what they've been taught in school is for AI, you just take a Python script, you import a few libraries and — voila! And that's not how the industry works. People with a lot of data know-how to know the underlying mathematics and things. The tech industry is highly competitive, so it's really hard to find people that have the AI or robotics background plus a few years of experience.

Freeman: *It sounds like the technologies that are trying to utilize AI need some kind of gatekeeper. I don't know who that would be, but couldn't you see a world in 20 years where the AI is dumber because it's got less knowledge coming in? So, it's feeding on its poorer input coming in and it gets worse and worse and worse, potentially. How do you, how do you gate-keep that?*

Andra: That's obviously a big topic, and people are talking about synthetic AI to fill the gaps, where you can have now AI create a bunch of new data that's sort of hypothetical or synthetic to continue to train itself on. I don't see it ever getting dumber. I don't think that's plausible, but plateauing? Certainly, that's one possible future where you just see it kind of plateau out in this kind of asymptotic relationship.

Orr: I was just going to say, in that 20-year time span that you're talking about, I think that a lot of people believe that general AI will be available at that point, which I think would be the opposite of it getting done.

Washington: Well, AI is only as good as it's been trained. … So it scans the whole Internet, right, for example. Whereas it's continuing to get learning and training. It's us talking to it, giving it contextual understanding, some knowledge, some experience.

So there is that element of, can it keep up, as long as we continue to provide that information? But if the world is filled with AI slop, absolutely, it'll just train on slop

Leleux: Which is scary.

Freeman: *So, looking out just in a shorter term — you know, just a couple years — what are the trends? This is a broad question, but generally speaking, what kind of trends do you see in the way that AI is being used and the directions that it's going? I'll just throw it out to whoever wants to try to tackle that one.*

Leleux: I just love what Sunny said. I would hope that where it's going is that every person can find that ability to save, save time, and then reinvest it in something that really matters.

Washington: I had an early experience of … 15 or so years ago. I worked at a company where we had a digital literacy certification. So, all teachers had to take this, and it was the first time that computers were being introduced into the classroom. And in Utah, the teachers had to take this certification so that they could use the computers. And I cringe at it now, because I look at the types of things that we made them learn, which is, like, what is an operating system? Well, who cares, you know? But I had an English teacher that came to the testing center and she failed those questions, which caused her to fail the test eight times. And I think about that a lot, because she was so upset and said, "Maybe I shouldn't teach anymore." And like we would look today and say, "Oh, my gosh, no. Just teach English. It doesn't matter if you know what an operating system is." So I think that we live in a world where AI is extremely exciting and we can talk about the models and what's coming in agents and CPS and throughout all these acronyms. But at the end of the day, we're all human. And I don't know if we need to know all the ins and the outs. Like, people building companies and setting up the frameworks and all that, that's important. But as regular humans, if it makes our life better, gives us more time, like, wasn't that the goal anyway? I think about that like that teacher all the time as I've been doing this.

Andra: The big trend we're watching at Talbot West — and we've developed a thesis around this — we call it our five-year thesis. The five years might be off. It might happen in three, or it might happen in seven. But we believe it's going to happen is a trend toward total organizational intelligence. Think of it like a central nervous system that runs throughout an organization. So right now, when we think of AI, we're thinking of it as these very kind of isolated point solutions: "Oh, I think I'm going to deploy AI for this thing or that thing within my company." And it's kind of a standalone, but we see where things are headed, is this total orchestration across every department. Data is synchronized, efficiencies are like Surface that you wouldn't even imagine today. It's going to be phenomenal, and it's a lot to get from here to there. I mean, a lot of systems are going to have to be almost, like, rebuilt and to get this level of orchestration. So, we're helping companies like, how do you start getting advantages today? Like that's great that that's what it's going to be in five years. How do you start moving toward it in a way that you get immediate advantages, but build incrementally toward that.

Freeman: *If you're approached by someone who's just starting a business, an entrepreneur or a small-business owner, any advice for them on how they would go about best implementing AI into their new business venture? It's going to depend on the business, I'm sure.*

Russell: I think form policies and definitely form a strategy about it first. Don't just dive into it. And I think, at least in my company, I see a lot of vectors. People have their own perception of how it's used, and it's helpful to them. But we, again, small company — 30, 35 people — we don't have a policy. But I think that's kind of the important thing for how it evolves. And kind of tying into your last question about how does it evolve? How do we implement it? There needs to be some known limitations and you need to educate your staff on what it can and can't and should and shouldn't do and be used for. I think it's really early and I think it's a little schizophrenic right now in its implementation and use.

Orr: I agree with what Jim said. I wanted to add that what I would tell anybody starting up is, one thing that we all have that AI doesn't is, we're incredibly adaptable as humans. So just stay adaptable because it's going to change constantly every day. Just, you've got to be ready to roll with that or you're going to get run over by it.

Washington: I do see I think it was Sam Altman that said in this generation we'll see the one-person billion-dollar company. What does that look like, to have that much wealth created by one person, and value? That could be incredibly interesting or it could be a disaster. I don't know.

Andra: I would say in terms of advice to new business owners dabbling with AI, two things. One, max out the capabilities of these easy-to-use commercial tools like ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity, Gemini, etc. You can get so much out of them if you learn to use all the different tricks, custom GPTs, things like that. But also know what not to use them for, what those security limitations and things are. So, have some boundaries around that. But yeah, that's where you'd start. Get full functionality out of those tools. And then this is self-serving, but I believe it's totally true: Get some professional help. Just like you probably wouldn't want to try to file all your own patents and do all your own IP work, get some professional help that can come in and actually help you create a roadmap. That's "OK. We've maxed out these easy-to-use tools. What's next? How is this all going to fit together? What's a comprehensive plan for our organization?"

Bybee: We have used AI basically in three ways. The first way is, how to use AI to develop the product. And then the second is to use AI in the product. And then third is, what does the next product iteration look like? What is product management, how can they learn what to build next? So, I guess my advice then would be, identify how AI could best affect your bottom line for whatever time window you're looking to optimize over.

Brooksby: AI provides the opportunity for you to be an expert in everything, and you can get lost in understanding yourself and what your true talents are and your true interests. I think about our founding story and it really focused on our co-founder. He developed Alexa far-field speech recognition through Amazon, purchased his startup out of Boston 15 or more years ago, and he was really good at speech. We took a stake in the ground. We said, "We're going to be the best at using speech and AI," and we've stuck to that. And as I mentioned, we've developed the technology. We own the most patents in the industry. We didn't say that just because we're in health care, we're going to do this, this, and this and this, right? And so I think just really having that motto for yourself, of what you're trying to accomplish, will allow you to use AI to become better. But you won't get lost in it.

Freeman: *Is there any topic that we haven't covered that somebody wants to touch on?*

Russell: One that was kind of a reoccurring theme is, we have these open AI machines that we feed information into and we know they're very cognizant because they can track what we talked about before and they tie it all together over time. … What we use it for also is product development, research and development. And back to, can we trust it, as well? So those kinds of things culminate together to protect our intellectual property. If we're an R&D company or … we all are developing intellectual property in our own way, and if we're using these open models that we're feeding information into, tie that together with a cloud computer — just another name for someone else's hard drive — and is our data secure? And I'm not an attorney. I don't go and read the policies on Grok. I use Grok. And it's like, is it learning from me or someone else? And how are we protected? How is our intellectual property going to be protected? And maybe it is more local server, local agents that are assistive to us that are firewalled to have access to information, but maybe more of a one-way pipe. …

Freeman: *Yeah, that's an important point, because from a patent standpoint, if you're working on an invention, you're supposed to keep it secret until you're ready to file your application. And if you've disclosed enough of it that it's out there on a server somewhere, I don't know the parameters of that.*

Orr: Another point is that it's already here. So you don't have to make a decision as to whether or not you want to work with AI. You already are, if you don't know it.

Russell: So maybe that even gets into the legislation of AI in general. And a lot of lawyers [are] involved in that. keeping firewalls around the information that we upload onto these clouds. That may hamper its ability to expand and be adopted if we're running into intellectual property problems along the way.

Freeman: *There is a legislation recently passed in Utah that seems to me to be the opposite of the DMCA safe harbor that you hear about. It basically says you can't blame AI. Have you guys run into that?*

Washington: So the state does have a sandbox or through the Department of Commerce, you can set up a sandbox environment, but specifically it's for those that are doing anything that has to do with mental health or health. I guess you can do other things, too, but then it basically provides a framework. So, you can start to build without legislation hanging over your head. It'll be interesting. I personally don't love that we would have 50 different policies. The hope is that we just have one, because that would be a nightmare for any company to navigate. So I think we'll see, but government is notoriously slow to catch up. Tech companies do what we do, which is move fast and break things, and sometimes that's really detrimental to society.

Leleux: I think the way that I tie it together is, I often go to talks or listen to podcasts or whatever, and people will talk about "I feed it inaccurate data," or "I feed it fake data about my company" or something like that. So it's kind of, what is it training on, what is it learning? I did do one where I spent a weekend learning to code and coding some reports that I wanted, but I did feed it just fake data. And then I was, like, well, once I get the code, I can put in my own data for the company. …

Orr: One thing that didn't come up today, which I was expecting, is cybersecurity and how AI is going to disrupt all of the traditional things. I'm hearing Jim talk about firewalls and that's over. I think AI is going to completely disrupt cybersecurity, especially since it is outside the walls of our government control and everything else. So it's a big concern. It's something that companies should be thinking about.

Andra: It seems like it's a bit of an arms race where bad actors are using AI to more rapidly and at scale, exploit both find vulnerabilities and exploit them. So they can just do that at a far greater scale. But then the cybersecurity providers, the providers of these solutions, are now using AI to try to more rapidly detect intrusions, patch them, and all of. So it's a bit of an arms base. AI versus AI.

Bybee: The stakes are really high in certain industries because you'll sometimes, if you rely on AI or something for minute-to-minute operations, you can easily be susceptible to denial of service, for instance, or to bad actors coming in and shutting your system down for large amounts of time.

Barnes: I've already dealt with this with our insurer on our cyber policy, because we are in this process of building out capabilities and we're already seeing our rates go through the roof because, how do you ensure for what you don't know, right? I mean it used to be antivirus. OK, you got your firewall placed, you got your PII protected, and so on. Now, it's like something could come next week that you didn't even know existed and damage you. So how do you insure for something like that? It's crazy.

Andra: Well, and to your point, Parrish, I don't think it's just that it's going out to something outside and coming back. because we've been doing that forever with cloud infrastructure. It's that there are specific vulnerabilities with these AI tools, the specific types of attacks that can happen through them. Prompt engineering type of things or trying to get it to release data or inject certain things. I think that's all pretty manageable with the right security infrastructure. But, you know, there are vulnerabilities that are very time-consuming to sniff out, and then these bad actors are able to deploy AI that can go sniffing around and find these at much higher scale, so it just increases their capability

Freeman: *I want to end on a higher note, so let's talk about some positive things that we see coming through AI, just generally, I guess, in your businesses.*

Brooksby: I think the investment. If you look at where VCs are investing, I mean, AI is getting up there right now. I hear a lot of people saying, "AI." People are, they're like banking on AI here, and I think that's good. I think there's a lot of negativity out there in the world, and if we can find positivity as humans. … We're going through a technology revolution that is akin to the Industrial Revolution. It truly is. So I think it's an exciting time, a good time to be alive.

Russell: Vertical industries are benefiting from it hugely. Semiconductors are going to be needed a lot more. Also power to operate all these large data centers. And we can't expand power fast enough. I don't think wind and solar is going to get us there. The traditional methods, I think things like distributed small modular reactors and things like that are going to be the future. And that's whole new industries that we get to evolve and that's going to be huge for our economy and scaling.

Andra: One bright side I see is that AI is going to do a lot of the low-level work that humans don't really enjoy doing, and humans will be freed up and positioned to do some of the things that they're uniquely good at that aren't likely to be replaced by AI. And one of those is human relationships. Humans are going to be better for the foreseeable future at human relationships than AI. And human relationships are incredibly important in a lot of industries. So, humans will be able to do more of that side of things. Also the high-level strategic thinking of bringing the big picture, synthesizing across multiple disciplines. I think for the foreseeable future that's going to be very needed. Judgment. These sorts of things that humans will be freed up to do more of that, the stuff that they can uniquely do, and not have to do a lot of the stuff they don't really enjoy doing.

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