



# B&L NEWS

JANUARY 2024 | VOL. 34 | NO. 1

## ENTERPRISE RESOURCE PLANNING FOR METALCASTERS

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Editor:  
Shelby  
Smithers  
Phone:  
269.465.6207  
Email:  
ssmithers@  
blinfo.com

Website:  
www.BLInfo.com



## Recap and Looking Forward

### CEO'S CORNER



Phil Laney, CEO

2023 was a wonderful year here at B&L. Here are some data points summarizing our successes:

- **15 New customers** committed to Odyssey ERP for metal casters
- **12 metal casters** went "live" with Odyssey
- **7 new team members** came on board
- **3,734 service tickets** were resolved for our customers
- **99.99% B&L Cloud uptime**
- **5% increase** in total sales

2024 promises to be an even better year. The Odyssey enhancement I am most excited about is the release of Odyssey BI (Business Intelligence). We will have a Beta release in April with a full release in November. This new functionality is built on the

existing Data View module, so all of the training and education spent on Data Views will be carried over to Odyssey BI. A major objective of this new module is to allow our customers to create dashboards of KPI's which are updated as Odyssey data is updated. No data warehouse or nighttime run to update a 2nd database. All dashboards are instantly updated. Our vision is to "seed" Odyssey with Dashboards depicting KPI's such as On-time shipping %, Overall Scrap %, Equipment OEE, Labor Hours/Ton, and many others. Users might be able to use these "stock" dashboards or "personalize" them for their own unique analytical views. If you subscribe to the Intelligent Views add-on product, you'll get the new Odyssey BI module at no additional cost.

B&L will be exhibiting at all the normal industry trade shows in 2024. We invite you to stop by our booths to get a glimpse at some of the upcoming features in Odyssey. Spectrum 2024, the B&L User Conference event, is scheduled for October 6-9 in Charleston, South Carolina. Spectrum always offers tremendous learning opportunities for your staff to get the most out of your ERP software. Wishing you a wonderful 2024 and, as always, thank you for your business.

Regards,

Phil Laney, CEO

### Will we see you at our upcoming classes?

**Boot Camp** – March 4-5, 2024

**Inventory Workshop** – April 10, 2024

**Crystal Reports** – March 6-7, 2024

**Scheduling Workshop** – April 11, 2024

Classes will be held both in person and virtually. Please see our website for full details. (BLInfo.com/Classes)

## New staff additions

### JANUARY

-  Signing ●
-  Goes-Live ●
-  Goes-Live ●

### FEBRUARY

-  Signing ●
-  Goes-Live ●

- Patrick McCrevan writes article for ICI 
- Matt Connolly joins B&L 
- Walton Yeboah-Amoako joins B&L 
- Boot Camp class
- Crystal Reports class

### MARCH

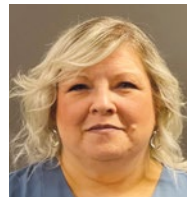
-  Signing ●
-  Goes-Live ●
-  Signing ●

### APRIL

-  Signing ●
-  Goes-Live ●
- Miles Rekos joins B&L 
- Riley Reichert joins B&L 

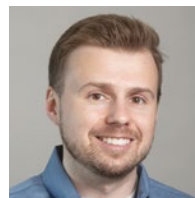
### MAY

-  Signing ●
-  Goes-Live ●
-  Goes-Live ●
-  Goes-Live ●



**Janet Bousho,**  
Project Consultant

Janet has a BBA in Business management and Accounting and a sound Knowledge of lean manufacturing principles and techniques. She has held roles in operations, continuous improvement and supply chain management. Janet has worked in steel, iron, and aluminum foundries, as well as the rail, automotive, heavy equipment and furniture industries.



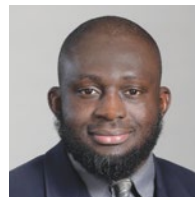
**Miles Rekos,**  
Account Executive

Miles earned his bachelor's at Indiana University in Business and Public Relations. Miles has over 9 years of work experience in sales and management.



**Steve Johnson,**  
Support Representative

Steve is a 1999 graduate of Siena Heights University with a Computer Information Systems degree. Steve has previous experience working with software and Electronic Data Interchange, within the healthcare industry for over 17 years.



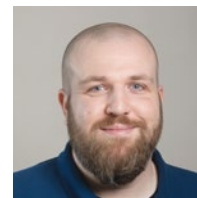
**Walton Yeboah-Amoako,**  
Support Representative

Born in Kumasi, Ghana, and having lived in St. Kitts & Nevis, this Southwest Michigan resident brings diverse experiences. A former Whirlpool Corporation Supervisor, he holds a Biomedical Sciences degree from Western Michigan University. Passionate about information technology, he found his calling at B&L.



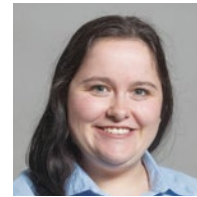
**Matt Connolly,**  
Software Engineer

Miami University alum Matt, with a B.S. in Business Administration, excelled in media research as Research Director at a local TV station and later showcased business acumen as Head of Sales for an electronics recycling firm. Matt is married with two dogs, George and Bogan.



**Riley Reichert,**  
Support Representative

Riley has previous experience as a chef, working for his culinary teacher after high school, as well as experience in data entry at Press Ganey. He has been together with his wife Sara for 20 years and they have three children.



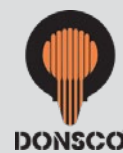
**Sydney Bleich,**  
Support Representative

Sydney received a Criminology degree from Saint Mary's College in 2022. Sydney has prior experience working as a Public Safety Answering Point Information Systems Specialist. In her free time, she likes spending time with her cat, dog, and horse.

## Signings

Three new companies joined the Odyssey family in Q4, 2023 including:

- Huron Casting, Inc. from Pigeon, MI
- Donsco, Inc. from Wrightsville, PA
- Col-Pump Company, Inc. of Columbiana, OH



**ODYSSEY UPDATE**



Brad Clark, Manager  
Research & Development

## Odyssey Review By Brad Clark

This past year was successful for B&L and the R&D team. Two versions of Odyssey were released, which included almost 200 performance and stability improvements, 99 functional enhancements, and 36 feedback forum requests. This past year’s primary strategic direction for application development was not to focus on any one large feature but to develop many smaller-scoped enhancements that would have a more significant impact on our customer base. Although

Odyssey has been around for over 21 years, it is still a growing and evolving product. As existing users make more use of the system and new users come on board, Odyssey needs to be adaptable to meet the needs of metalcasters.

For several years, Odyssey’s internal infrastructure has been undergoing an evolutionary redesign to improve the user experience. The new menu system was released several years ago, laying the foundation for Odyssey’s future. In 6.4.4, we released a first look at our new production entry screens. In 6.4.5, Links and Comments will be the first screens to take on our new styling. With each new release, more and more of the system will be converted. Because we are being deliberate with the new user interface’s release, we can be sure that we are also improving and enhancing the business components that help you run your business. The Customer Feedback Forum is chock full of great ideas, and we want to get all of them into the system as quickly as possible.

Odyssey has lots of data, but getting it into the hands of decision-makers can be challenging, which is why we are developing a new module named Odyssey BI. One of the objectives of Odyssey BI is to make it easier to get your KPIs out of Odyssey and into graphs, gauges, or even data grids for all level of users. Odyssey BI is more than just a single enhancement. It encompasses many areas of the system, from the gauges and graphs that are rendered from Data Views to how the data is constructed. Used in conjunction with Company Goals, Odyssey BI will be a powerful tool to reinvent how you look at your data. The first phase of Odyssey BI will be released in Odyssey 6.4.5, which will be generally available in late March and updated in the B&L Cloud in April. In this first release, the dashboards you see in the main menu will be rendered with new Odyssey BI graphs and gauges. You will also be able to create new full-screen Odyssey BI dashboards. The second phase of Odyssey BI will be released in November when Odyssey 7.0 is released.

Our fall 2024 release is scheduled for November, and it will be a major release of Odyssey. Not only will there be a slew of new features released, but we will also upgrade the Progress version Odyssey uses as the backbone of its infrastructure. It is important for us to stay current with Progress’ software to ensure your systems run on a reliable and secure platform. Progress is retiring version 11.7 in 2025, so we need to be sure that we move to their latest Long Term Support version. We are also moving to their latest application server technology, which they call PASOE. Similar to our rearchitected internal UI, Progress’ PASOE rearchitects their backend systems to be more powerful and efficient. This upgrade will be a major endeavor, and we will provide more details in the Spring regarding the day that your system will be upgrade.

2024 is a big and exciting year for B&L, and we look forward to helping all our customers Make Better Decisions Faster!

Brad Clark  
Vice President – Research and Development

**JUNE**



Signing ●

Boot Camp class

Crystal Reports class

Janey Bousho joins B&L 

**JULY**



Goes-Live ●

Sydney Bleich joins B&L 

Stephen Johnson joins B&L 

**AUGUST**



Signing ●



Goes-Live ●

Goes-Live ●

Boot Camp Class

Crystal Reports Class

**SEPTEMBER**

Spectrum in San Antonio, TX 

**OCTOBER**

Boot Camp Class

Crystal Reports Class

**NOVEMBER**



Signing ●

Patrick McCrevan writes article for ICI 

**DECEMBER**



Signing ●



Signing ●



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B&L Information Systems, Inc.  
4707 Rambo Rd.  
Bridgman, MI 49106-9723

Phone: 269.465.6207  
[www.BLInfo.com](http://www.BLInfo.com)



## Never too early to start planning!

Spectrum 2024 will be held October 6-8 in Charleston, South Carolina. Spectrum is a user conference like no other. Held for over 25 years, Spectrum is the largest gathering of Odyssey using metalcasters. Two full days of mini-classes and networking. Breakfast, lunch and dinner included. Fun activities to strengthen industry bonds. You won't want to miss this!

Additional details will be shared with our customers or you can also visit our website, [blinfo.com](http://blinfo.com).