

HXGN Live Leadership Summit Speech

[What follows is a speech written for the Senior V.P. of American Sales for the Hexagon Safety & Infrastructure Division at their 2019 HxGN Live Leadership Summit. Attending were public safety executives, industry influencers and analysts from organizations around the world, including Microsoft, IDC and the Public Policy Forum.]

I want to start by thanking you all for being here. My name is Bill Campbell; I'm the Senior Vice President for the Americas, and today I have the pleasure of welcoming you to the 2019 HxGN Live Leadership Summit. Over the next two days, we're going to be talking about a few key issues in the Safety & Infrastructure division: the challenges facing public safety agencies, advancements in technology, implementing agency change and more. When I'm finished speaking, our Eastern Sales Director, Chris Carver, is going to discuss the future of 911 & CAD systems. But before we get to Chris, I wanted to take this time to talk a little bit about the purpose of this Leadership Summit and of HxGN. I want to talk about Hexagon and our role in public safety.

Traditionally, this conference has always centered around the question "What's next?" And because HxGN Live is a user's conference, we typically direct that question to our customers: What are the next big challenges they're going to face? What's next on the public safety horizon? The task of answering this question for our clients is what has made HxGN a success: it's led to powerful breakout sessions and provocative keynotes, thoughtful user groups and important technical trainings. Answering "What's next?" has led to more than just a successful conference: it's led to confidence and trust from our customers that we have their backs.

It's what's set us apart from our competition.

Because for a lot of companies, including our competitors, "What's next?" is a terrifying proposition. "What's next" is the kind of question that keeps them up at night. Because when you ask yourself "What's next", you're no longer willing to accept the status quo. When you stop to think about, "What's next?", you're admitting that where you are, right now, is not where you could be. That you can do more. In the Safety & Infrastructure division, we're not afraid of "What's next?" because we know something that our competitors don't: if you're not willing to adapt to what's next, eventually, you won't have a world to adapt to.

In the last two decades, we've seen change develop at a massive scale. The 2000s brought tragedies we couldn't have anticipated; at the time, we thought things were going to get easier. But then 9/11 happened. Then Katrina. Then the Haitian earthquake; Arab Springs; the Boston Bomber; mass shootings; California wildfires—these events have radically transformed the world of public safety.

But it isn't just the big events: it's also day-to-day work. It's defending against cyberattacks and remote radicalization; adapting and responding to disasters as municipalities and urban centers expand; finding ways to acquire new information on threats we've never had to deal with before. Nearly every part of our business has changed, no matter whether its selling CAD systems to agencies or unlocking multi-agency collaboration and response with new technologies. It's no longer about what we can do; now it's about delivering what we know is possible given our nearly-30 years of public safety experience. Our customers have to be prepared for every possible scenario—our job is to help get them there.

But we know that “What’s next?” isn’t just a question for our users. It’s a question that we have to face as a company; it’s a question for every one of us in this room. Our goal entering the 2020s is to redefine who we are and what we mean to the world of public safety. The first step of that process begins tomorrow morning with Steven Cost’s keynote, and it continues with a new portfolio that we’ll be launching, here, at HxGN Live. But before we get there, we need to talk about something important, something that I’ve been thinking about, lately, when it comes to our public safety competition.

In the last few years, our marketplace has felt a lot like an assembly line: we’ve seen company launch after company launch—every press release claiming their solution is going to “fix” public safety. What’s funny is these new entrants don’t actually attempt to fix anything—they walk into agencies, slam in CAD packages and wait for the maintenance checks to come, just like every other competitor. It reminds me a lot of the old proverb: our competitors are selling agencies on the belief that they can fix all of their problems, quickly. But we know that the future of public safety is going to extend further than we’ve ever been before. It’s up to us to convince agencies that, if they want to go far, we have to go together.

But before we can know where we’re going, we have to know where we’re coming from. For us, it started 50 years ago with the Intergraph Corporation. It started in Huntsville, Alabama with engineers from IBM. It started with Apollo 8 and man going to the moon.

The history of our company has been shaped by the desire to find creative solutions to national challenges. It was due to our employee’s digital calculations in the late 60s that man first flew to the moon. It was because of our computerized plant design that the oil shortages of the 70s didn’t extend into the following decade. For the last 50 years, we’ve been on the forefront of innovation; we’ve stood on the cutting edge of digital realities, with every advancement reinforcing our belief that the most critical component to acquiring and maintaining customers is product quality.

20 years ago, we formally entered the public safety space with the world’s first map-based computer-aided dispatch system with I/CAD. Because of its quality, it was quickly adopted by public safety agencies, airports, industrial plants and military bases—for decades, we have served as a cornerstone for monitoring and response agencies. After launching I/CAD, we turned to adaptive technology suites: records management, video analysis, mobile computing; we can now say that we’re a comprehensive partner for the largest and most important public safety agencies in the world.

But the reason these agencies trust us—the reason why we continue to make immense strides in public safety—isn’t just because we have the best technology. It’s because experience is an invaluable tool: one we constantly utilize. Our collective knowledge and understanding of public safety are what have allowed us to continually deliver results to our customers—first as Intergraph, and now as Hexagon. Because you don’t spend as many years as we have without discovering a few trapdoors for agencies to fall through; these obstacles have turned into valuable lessons learned that we apply every day.

Earlier, I mentioned the increasing importance of multi-agency collaboration for addressing new threats. One trapdoor our competitors can’t seem to help avoiding is the misunderstanding or overestimation of what it really takes to bring numerous agencies together—especially when they’re disparate agencies like police and fire or traffic and EMS. What they don’t realize is that their work doesn’t end when the solution gets implemented—these agencies have to continue growing together as the combined solution evolves over time. But we do. We focus on more than just one-time solutions: instead, we offer holistic

solutions governance to help these agencies to not only implement cutting-edge technology, but to also work past the growing pains of adjustment.

But our role isn't limited to just identifying the obstacles we've already faced: it's our job to help prepare agencies for the trapdoors that we haven't yet experienced. Take, for example, agency information acquisition. In the last decade, we've seen a dramatic increase in the amount of data that can be amassed from video. But what we haven't had to address yet is how the increase of live image feeds is going to affect our dispatchers day-in and day-out.

Street corner cameras. Body cameras. There is no question that video has the capability to increase our situational awareness. Where there are potential trapdoors are with our call takers and our dispatch personnel who will be adding these live feeds to their workloads—some of these videos aren't easy to watch. There is a difference between being on the other end of a telephone line and watching the incident play out in front of you. What agencies need are the experience and the resources and the solutions governance to properly ensure that technology doesn't cause significant damage to the human side of the public safety equation. They need a trusted advisor who can help them avoid these potential trapdoors; they need someone who can help them anticipate what's next.

Which brings us back to why we're here today: what does it mean to go further together? How can we address the question of "What's next?" in the modern era of public safety and 9-1-1?

To start, it means that we must accept that, in order to achieve lasting success, we have to be willing to operate as true allies of public safety agencies—in every sense of the term. We know that our customers' job is to protect both their cities and their citizens; it's our job to help guide them through the changes we know are coming—to help navigate an always-shifting digital space and an increasingly-complex technological arena—not just install our latest CAD system and call it a day. That's why our suite of products is so comprehensive. That's why we partner with the best innovators in their fields. That's why Steven Cost is announcing our new portfolio during his keynote tomorrow morning: we're at our best when we can account for every scenario.

But there's another aspect to this discussion, one that's just as important as what's happening in the future, and that's "How is Hexagon contributing to solving the problems of today?" Here in the Safety & Infrastructure division, we are continuing to build our reputation as a thought leader in public safety by utilizing our status to continue providing essential solutions governance. Our goal is to leverage our history to bear change by filling gaps, as needed, and serving as a leader in the public safety community.

One part of that process is reflected here today: by bringing together key members in public safety, we're taking a step forward in our collective understanding of the roles we play; so many times, collaboration comes only after something has gone wrong and we're facing down the 'moment of truth', together. Let's view this summit as a chance to prepare during the calm before the storm; an advanced warning—so to speak—that allows us to spot those trapdoors on the ground and avoid falling through.

Another part of this process is in the work we did, years ago, to anticipate the problems agencies are facing now and to address them preemptively. And so now when these agencies ask us whether we can achieve short-term goals or help accomplish long-term solutions—whether we can help them go quickly or help them go far—we can look them in the eye and tell them: with Hexagon, you can have both.

With Hexagon, you can have both resiliency and innovation. You can have both adaptability and a proven-track record of success. You can have both the power of the world's leader in CAD as well as a company who knows your name and understands your agency's needs. You can be backed by a team of cyber security and customer support professionals and still maintain cost-efficiency. You can have the knowledge and the solutions governance of a company with 30 years of experience in public safety, along with the dynamic problem-solving and solutions-building of a start-up one-tenth of that age.

Here at Hexagon, we don't shy away from "What's next?" because we know that, at the end of the day, the Hexagon solution prioritizes the quality of our customer products above all else. Because regardless of what's next, we know that excellence will always matter. Which is why all of you are here: we know that, if we want to be successful, we have to work with the best.

Over the next two days, we're going to be discussing key issues in the world of public safety, and we're going to do it with our finest partners. It's an important opportunity, and we're thankful that you could all be here to join us. Because at the end of the day, we know that none of us in this room can be certain of what's coming next, but we do all know one thing: no matter what happens, we're going to be ready to face it together.

Thank you, everyone. And welcome to HxGN Live.