

# LNL Systems

## Equipping Retailers to Profit from IoT



Mark Barnes, CEO

*“Our FlorLink SmartHub™ is the first retail IoT platform that transforms alerts from connected in-store sensors into actionable messages for retail associates and managers.”*

### Man of the hour

#### Mark Barnes, CEO

Mark is currently CEO of LNL Systems which he founded in 2009. Prior to starting the company, he was an Enterprise Account Manager responsible for North East sales of a National Systems Integrator. He earned a BS in Finance at Bentley University and an MBA from Babson College.

**F**ounded in 2009, the company began by providing communication equipment for the retail industry. Today, it is one of Motorola Solution’s largest business-class two-way radio partners in North America – providing cost effective communication solutions for many national retailers in the US and Canada. As an innovator and leader in the retail technology space, LNL Systems has evolved to deliver the most comprehensive portfolio of smart devices, platform integration and analytics that retailers use to profit from the Internet of Things.

IoT platforms have enabled businesses to be much more efficient and reduce costs associated with product failures and downtime. For instance- in a supermarket, temperature sensors in a refrigerator or freezer can alert maintenance personnel if the temperature exceeds a certain threshold. When it comes to IoT in the retail industry- a special mention about LNL Systems has to be made.

Meet the CEO of this innovative company- Mark Barnes. He’s here to tell us more about IoT and how his company is making a difference.

### ***Let’s start with IoT. What do you feel are the important elements of IoT?***

IoT is a term that encompasses a wide variety of interconnected systems and devices that comprise a vast network. These networks will allow the transfer of data without human to human or human to machine interaction.

### ***What are the products and solutions LNL offers?***

The FlorLink SmartHub™ is at the

heart of our solution. It is a rules-based engine that manages inputs from many disparate sources such as sensors, cameras, third-party 'Loss Prevention' devices, corporate files and maps these inputs to outputs such as two-way radios, smartwatches, tablets, digital displays, email/text notifications and much more. All of the event data is compiled and sent to the Azure cloud for reporting and analysis. We also offer our own customer facing products such as customer call buttons, sensor mats, and dry contact relay switches.

***Do you think the present security infrastructure is enough to handle the data***

***How do you think IoT will impact the longevity of your business?***

IoT is going to jump-start a huge growth period for LNL Systems. We see an enormous opportunity to connect devices and systems within a retail environment in order to revolutionize the way retailers service their customers. The result will be a more efficient and productive workforce that offers an exceptional customer experience.

***From the viewpoint of the end-user, how does IoT benefit them?***

informed and with a positive impression.

***Do you think IoT will have any effect on employment in the future?***

Yes. Devices such as temperature sensors that eliminate the need to manually record refrigerator temperature multiple times a day or presence monitoring sensors that free up cashiers to stock shelves during slow times- will enable store associates to do more meaningful and valuable tasks. I don't see it as a reduction in the workforce because retail is already very

## In-Use

The star product of the company- FlorLink SmartHub™ is implemented in many retail stores. One example is a large department store that has installed the FlorLink SmartHub™ with several cameras in the Nike and Levis jeans departments. When someone dwells in that area for a designated period of time an alert is sent to the two-way radios notifying store associates that someone is in a specific area. Once the associate responds to the location they can either assist the customer in making a buying decision which will increase sales or deter a shoplifter from stealing which will decrease shrink.

***“No one else in the industry has LNL’s exclusive focus on smart sales floor technology to improve the shopping experience and leverage staffing.”***

***security requirements of IoT? If not, then how can it be improved?***

Each year the IoT components are becoming more and more secure. We chose to work on the Microsoft Windows 10 IoT Core platform with integration to the Microsoft Azure cloud. Microsoft has developed a robust security architecture that ensures data is encrypted and is built for a commercial enterprise. Our solution typically integrates with networks of large, national retail accounts so we have to pass strict security guidelines.

As a result of deploying this technology, the end user will experience less friction during the in-store buying experience. IoT enables retailers to do more with less without sacrificing a good customer experience. For example, imagine a customer is dwelling in the rear corner of the store trying to sort through a plethora of product choices and an associate shows up and asks “*how may I help you*” because they received a notification on their tablet or two-way radio and can make a product suggestion. The process was effortless for the customer, but they will leave the store better

lean, rather it will shift associate's work from menial to meaningful duties.

***Where do you see the future of IoT?***

IoT products are going to proliferate and we will see them in many areas of our lives. The world is becoming connected and so are the machines and devices that we use daily. The benefit will be systems that are more efficient and reliable which will ultimately enhance our lives.