

For immediate release:

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STILL MAKING CONNECTIONS AT 36

Thirty-six years ago, ABetter Answer Inc. (t/a ABA) , a 24-hour telephone answering service, opened its doors in a rented apartment above the Boyd & Fulford Drug Store on Main Street, Bel Air. There were 13 customers, 3 employees, telephone bills, insurances, two 557 cord switchboards, a stray cat and a dream that ABA would be successful.

Now, thirty-six (36) years later, ABA continues to provide 24-hour coverage and it is estimated that ABA touches the lives of more than 3,000 people daily.

ABA's client base includes medical practices in fourteen area hospitals and physician services surrounding the hospitals. Attorneys, plumbers, property management companies , computer specialists, oil companies, electricians and HVAC firms make up the commercial list.

When the federal government mandated HIPAA compliant regulations, ABA joined in with their ATSI (Association of Tele-Services International) members, to develop and carryout HIPAA compliant employee training and reporting programs.

“HIPAA regulations put the answering service industry right up front with medical offices, physicians and hospitals. It became mandatory that our employees attend HIPAA training programs, become accredited tele-receptionists and continue to professionally take delicate and accurate messages from callers”, according to Patricia Scott, owner of ABA.

The cord switchboards are gone. Today, the staff takes messages via computer and dispatches messages via internet protocol to homes, alpha, text and SMS. Once the message is delivered to the device, ABA receives a reply that the message has been delivered successfully. Special “apps” are required, ensuring secure delivery compliant with HIPAA federal regulations.

ABA, realizing the importance of continuous service, has a 15-KVA generator system and an Eaton Uninterruptable Power System, keeping ABA operating when the surrounding area is dark due to power outages.

Scott attributes much of the company’s success to the longevity of employees and their willingness to learn new programs. Half of ABA’s employee base has been with the company more than 10 years; one more than 30 years; another 27 years and a third more than 14 years.

“There’s lots to say about the mature worker in this business, “ according to Brian Scott, who started with the company while attending John Carroll High School. Now completing his 32nd year with the company, Scott emphasized the reliability of the mature worker. “We seek mature individuals with life skills and understanding of people’s needs under stressful situations.”

Older staff members carefully follow on call schedules according to Scott’s older son, Richard who has been with the company 20 years. “We process thousands of calls daily to physicians, hospitals and providers of hospital equipment. Accuracy and proper processing of emergency calls makes the real difference. Minutes mean a lot in what we do,” according to Scott.

Recognizing the importance of staying competitive in today’s emerging markets, ABA has updated its telephone switch from digital to full voice over internet protocol (VOIP), including message logging and advanced voice mail programs, and no cost long distance provisions.

A Better Answer Inc. (t/a ABA) is located on Fulford Avenue, Bel Air.

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