

Brooklyn Exponent

TUESDAY

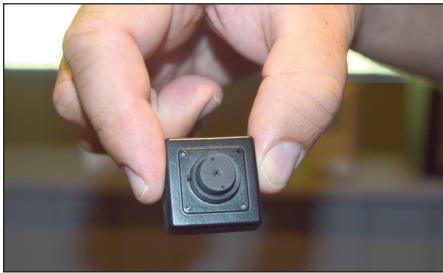
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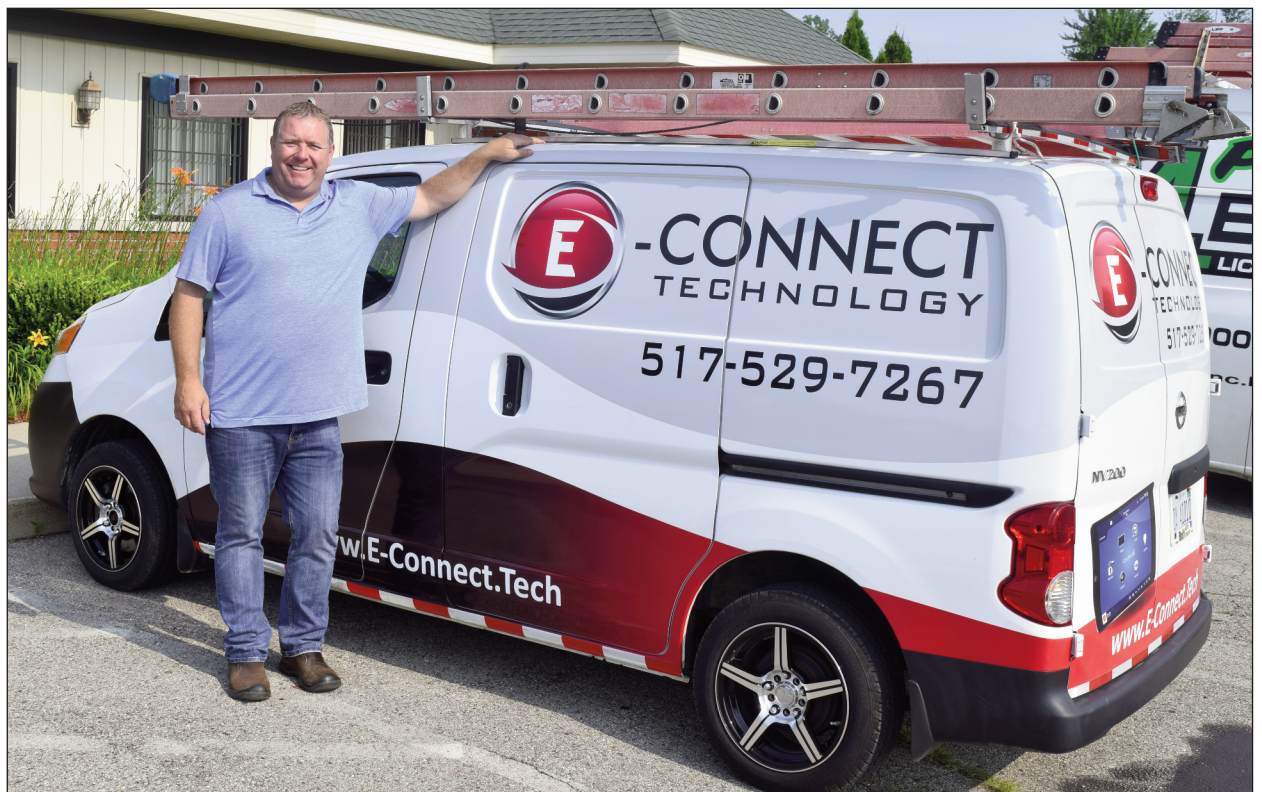
Get your digital house in order

“We get a lot of phone calls from people that will buy a shopping cart full of stuff at Best Buy, bring it home, and say ‘Oh my God.’”

Carl Evanson,
Owner, E-Connect Technology



This little device is a security camera that can be a part of any large or small security system available at E-Connect Technology.



Story and photos
By John Hummer
Editor

Just last week, Carl Evanson's new business, E-Connect Technology, put in a ring doorbell, three or four gas station cameras, and a whole new security camera system for a business on the north side of Jackson.

“It's definitely a wide variety of stuff that we're trying to bundle in to E-Connect Technology,” Evanson says. The business shares the building that houses A Plus Electric, also Evanson's, on U.S. 127 just north of Jefferson Road.

“I knew the demand was there,” he said. “The phone calls just kept coming in. A Plus Electric electricians were always asked to do this stuff. ‘Since you're here’ or ‘I can't find anyone to do this’ were common things those electricians heard. We just seemed to be getting more and more of this – that's why I started this other company – to bring a little clarity to what we're doing and how we're doing it.”

Now E-Connect Technology comes as kind of a one-stop shop.

“My low-voltage guy will happen to be on site, and the customer will say, ‘Oh, by the way, could you change out my outlet? And vice versa. My electrician will be on site and someone will say, ‘Oh, by the way, can you hang my plasma TV and hook up surround sound and give me full access on my i-Pad?’ I can't tell you how many people come in and say ‘I want to turn my lights on with my phone.’ Now we're able to say, ‘Yeah, no problem.’ Usually the guy that's there from either company can solve most of their problems.”

E-Connect Technology provides everything from video surveillance, digital signage, and home and office automation to network integration, home theater, and speaker installation. (One of Carl's favorites in an outdoor

“rock” speaker that looks like a rock and plays music.) In addition, the company will install point-of-sale (POS) systems, lighting control, and service legacy systems.

“The excitement of being here and doing what we do is how it changes every 30 seconds – every phone call,” Evanson says. “Every customer has a unique and different scenario. Then technology changes again and we have to adapt. It's a new world of customer service.”

The “E” in E-Connect comes from “Evanson” and “Ed” in Ed Cross, and connecting technology.

Evanson had no plan for E-Connect when he moved A Plus Electric from Jefferson Road to U.S. 127 in early 2018 – until he got talking with business friend Ed Cross.

Ed Cross owns a company called Cross Tech Digital. Evanson estimates Cross is close to 70 now.

“Ed and I worked side-by-side for 15 years. One of my first jobs was assisting Ed pulling wires,” he said.

Evanson said he and Cross had the same customers.

“On every job they needed low voltage and high voltage – and there's Carl and Ed. I used to joke, ‘Why don't we ride together?’ Everything in the relationship has always been there. Now we just let people know the name has changed but the same two people will show up at your door.”

Evanson said Cross, on the brink of

retirement, will play an advisory role to the growth of E-Connect.

“By moving here, it's opened the doors to all these new opportunities,” he said. “It's been exciting.”

Evanson says the company has its own stuff and can come in on the “front end” but will set up devices that people buy from Amazon and Best Buy “all the time.”

“We get a lot of phone calls from people that will buy a shopping cart full of stuff at Best Buy, bring it home, and say ‘Oh my God’. I can't tell you

how many times we show up and there is legitimately a shopping cart full of stuff all opened that says ‘very DIY-friendly’ – now all of a sudden we're involved and we're setting it up.

“That screen to your computer, to your phone, to your TV, to your i-Pad – this new connective world is confusing for most people if you're not dialed in on the exacts of what's going on. And then it changes.” He spoke of an Amazon product now not syncing with a Google product.

“I can't imagine how the home owner or the business owner would even manage it in-house. Even with an IT department, they're not too keen on pulling wires. We work for a lot of IT departments that don't want the labor end of that.”

On the commercial end of things, E-Connect does a lot of security camera work for businesses like gas stations and does a lot of digital signage.

Aside from the obvious security benefits of cameras, he says companies are now using them to help manage

their businesses. They can monitor snowfall in their parking lots from home, can see when employees come and go or are smoking in the parking lot, he says.

“Ninety percent we're noticing are using them as a management tool, then a break-in or theft [monitoring] tool.”

Digital signage is that information that is on the screen that somebody had to get data to, somebody had to get power to, and somebody had to provide the screen and mount it, Evanson said.

For example, from corporate headquarters, one person can now change information on signage at several company locations.

“You don't have to have a separate IT person for each one of those places.”

Evanson said that E-Connect put in 13 screens at the new Kelly Express Mart and The Galley in Napoleon.

“We handled all their menu boards, did all their coffee displays, and we did all their cameras. That place is amazing – I couldn't be more proud of that. As part of their team and as a partner and installer, I couldn't be more proud of the product.”

Evanson said the company's business breakdown is about 80 percent commercial and 20 percent residential, with 90 percent of it being within a one-hour window, with some as far as two hours.

“The residential stuff is growing now that we're starting to tell people about it.”

“Everybody says, ‘Oh I didn't know you did that’ and we do it.”

For more information, visit www.E-Connect.Tech, email office@E-Connect.Tech or call 517-529-7267.

