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Special Edition: Winter 2022

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Henry Overton , President Of Turn Key Solutions

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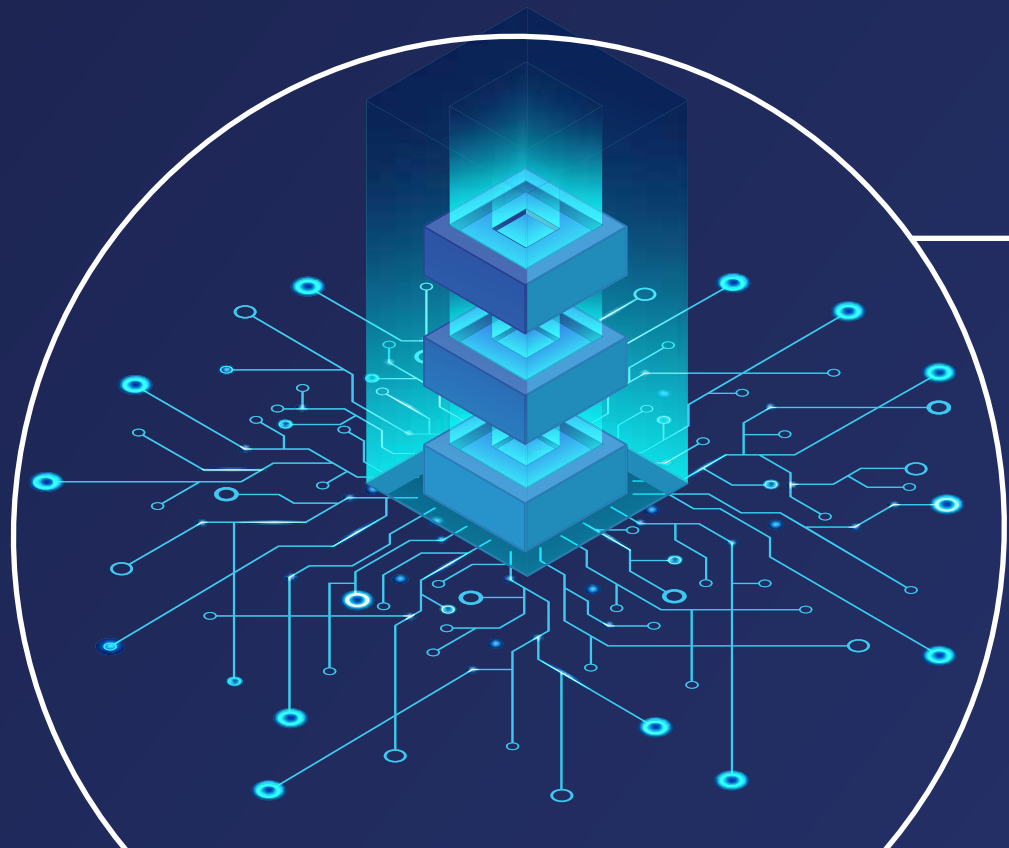
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Turn Key Solutions President Henry Overton Knows That When People Pull Together, Anything Can Be Accomplished

When Henry Overton went to college, his mission was to become a preacher. His father was a physician, his mother a consummate community servant. Every weekend, his family picked up a nursing home resident and took them to church. His mother would put homemade cookies in the mailbox for the mailperson. She didn't go anywhere where she didn't look for someone to help. "When I was six, I remember sweeping strangers' houses out and helping them make their beds. It was a cool upbringing, from that perspective," says Overton. "I constantly live short of my mother's example."

His parents set a clear example for Overton, inspiring him to pursue a career as a preacher, which he promptly set out to do after high school graduation. Everything was on track at his Texas college until sophomore year, when the church that oversaw the college underwent a massive theological shift. "It was disheartening because the enthusiasm of going to a fun college – where you really believe in everything that's going on, where everyone logically and philosophically believes similar things – was gone overnight," Overton remembers.

FROM DISAPPOINTMENT TO DIRECTION

He returned home and enrolled in Louisiana State University. "When I got my bachelor's degree, I was exhausted by school. Honestly, it had been traumatic," remembers Overton. "I completely lost my initial vision that I had spent 18 years developing." Sometimes it takes hitting rock bottom to realize what you still have around you. "I took courses in computer science all four years of my degree. I kept up with it because I enjoyed it," Overton says.

He also took education classes because, like his mother, he's always had a heart for helping others. "If I have an opportunity to help, train, educate, be of some service or value to people, that's what I get excited about," says Overton.

FROM PREACHER TO TEACHER

After finishing his degrees in computer science and education, he started working for a small private K-12 school in Baton Rouge teaching computer science and found renewed vigor. "I absolutely loved teaching. It's one of my favorite things that I do today. Education has carried through to today," says Overton. "It's one of my primary roles at Turn Key Solutions – to educate staff and clients." The school didn't have a lot of money to spare on technology, and the computers they had were dinosaurs. "After a few months, I convinced them to give me a tiny budget for hardware," recalls Overton. "With that, I bought the parts for 15 computers." Overton built his students' computer lab by hand, and finally they were out of the Stone Age.

Shortly after, Overton's school administrator knew of another K-12 school that needed help with its computers and network. Happy to help, Overton built out and maintained the school's network in the evenings. To help Overton, Harold Robinson, a local network systems administrator and programmer, volunteered his time too. Together, they worked on the school's network, until another project arrived.

Overton's school received a grant for a large piece of computer equipment. A local company dropped the machine at the door, and Overton and Robinson worked late hours trying to get it up and working. "The company that sold it to us wasn't answering

calls. They made the sale and disappeared, and it was so frustrating. But the school needed it, and so Robinson and I figured we could make it work," says Overton.

While they were getting the monster machine up and running, Overton remembers one of them saying, "Wouldn't it be nice if there was a company that would sell you this stuff and also teach you how to use it? Someone who could offer the whole suite of services?" The other of the pair replied, "Yeah, like a turnkey solution." It was days later that the two bought a copy of QuickBooks and formed an LLC and called it Turn Key Solutions. They cofounded the company with no customers. Then, business by business, increasing momentum with word-of-mouth recommendations, Turn Key Solutions grew into a thriving business that has now served nearly 400 customers from New Jersey to West Texas.

What Overton left behind in his pursuit of preaching, he gained as a leader and teacher for clients at Turn Key Solutions. "I love sitting down with a customer and really hearing their heart. Why are they in business? What keeps them up at night? How can I help them? The desire to help folks has carried through to today," says Overton.

HOW TURN KEY SOLUTIONS KEEPS CLIENTS SAFE AND HAPPY

Overton and his team balance two priorities when it comes to serving clients, but it's not an easy path. "I have two goals here. They keep me awake at night; they keep all of our team awake at night," says Overton. "I have to keep clients safe, and I have to keep them happy. Sometimes those goals don't mutually build toward each other."

"If I have an opportunity to help, train, educate, be of some service or value to people, that's what I get excited about."

When Overton puts more antivirus programs on client computers or more locks on their Internet, clients may get frustrated. Are they just adding "another thing" to their systems, or new software to learn? On the flip side he says, "If I don't put in the security precautions, or if I don't hound you about a new security vulnerability, then at some point or another, I'm not serving you. Furthermore, it will not make you happy when you find out that you've been hacked and that I could have helped you out."

THEY KEEP THE BALANCE BY BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Turn Key's approach to balancing those two priorities: getting to know their clients. Once they form a strong relationship, and learn their customer's needs and goals, they can provide solutions that make everyone happier. "If you're willing to have a conversation with me and tell me your plans, if you'll go grab a coffee with me and plan things out, if we can have a conversation where we're working as a team – those relationships work really well," says Overton. "I spend a lot of time thinking through what we know about a customer's business. Would this kind of technology work better? Do we have partners or vendors that can help?"

Those kinds of relationships, Overton says, give them crucial insight into their operations and where Turn Key can help make those operations better. Turn Key has several customers who've been with them, thriving with that relationship, for more than 19 years.

SIMPLY DOING THE BASICS GOES A LONG WAY

One of the simplest cyber security tips that Overton gives his clients is to simply keep up with basics. "The things we've been telling folks for several years, there's still deployment for those. Your doctor tells you to stop eating at Burger King and go for a jog once in a while to prevent heart attacks," says Overton. "We're still telling people, don't click on everything, make sure your backups are meeting standards. Doing the basics well goes a long way."

IT CAN'T BE YOUR MISSION IF YOU'VE ALREADY DONE IT

Overton knows that a client's business is more than the sum of its technology. It's also about the people, the goals, the livelihoods of everyone committed to the organization's success. "I don't think something can be your mission if you've already done it," he says. "We're keenly aware of the fact that accountability and transparency are a target to hit with our customers. We're going to work harder every day for our clients."

For more information on Turn Key Solutions, visit www.TurnKeySol.com. ■



Henry Overton - President