

L. JOHN SHIPLEY PE, CAP

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Controls and automation professional with 20+ years of experience across controls engineering, robotics integration, and automation project delivery — spanning automotive, consumer electronics, and discrete manufacturing environments. Career has progressed from hands-on technical work to organizational leadership, including P&L accountability as a regional director and as an executive team member at a venture-backed AI robotics startup. Served as lead engineer on a \$13.6M new model launch at one of the world's largest automotive casting plants, directed 100+ integration projects as a regional P&L owner, and scaled a customer success team from 8 to 16 while achieving 283% growth in monthly deployment throughput. Licensed Professional Engineer (Control Systems) and Certified Automation Professional with an MS in Business Administration — having worked directly with union skilled trades and presented quarterly to a board of directors.

LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES

- Functional Strategy Development & Execution
- Regional Operations & P&L Accountability
- Team Development & Organization Design
- Talent Acquisition & Development
- Customer Success & Technical Service Delivery
- Manufacturing & Engineering Change Leadership
- Manufacturing Engineering & Process Improvement
- Capital Investment Justification & Cost-Benefit Analysis
- Vendor Evaluation, Selection & Management
- Concurrent Project Delivery Across Multiple Client Sites
- Operational Metrics Design & Reporting

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Apera AI

October 2024 – March 2026

Director of Customer Success

Remote

Apera AI develops AI-powered robot vision software for industrial manufacturing, providing robots with human-like vision intelligence to improve automation speed and accuracy. Venture-backed startup based in Vancouver, BC.

Served on the executive leadership team, leading a customer success organization of 16 field applications engineers, customer success managers, and trainers responsible for deploying AI vision-guided robotics systems at manufacturing customers across North America and Europe. Presented quarterly to the board of directors on delivery performance, organizational capacity, and strategic priorities.

- Developed a standardized deployment process (Golden Playbook) — defining quality standards, handoff points, and customer acceptance criteria — that scaled deployment throughput from 6 to 23 systems per month, a 283% increase, with 29% average month-over-month growth in H2 2025.
- Developed a deployment tracking system in HubSpot — using a serialized numbering schema and per-system ticketing — reducing untracked systems from approximately 250 to fewer than 30, cutting unplanned escalations from roughly 2 per week to 1 per quarter, and giving the company full visibility into every active deployment.
- Managed simultaneous deployments across five Ford manufacturing facilities — personally spending roughly one month on-site in Kansas City to ensure on-time completion and customer acceptance — resulting in the highest-volume deployment month during my tenure.
- Built a customer training function from scratch, certifying 39 customer personnel in the first month, and led the opening of Apera's first U.S. customer training and applications center in Farmington Hills, Michigan.
- Scaled the customer success team from 8 to 16 — designing roles and organization structure, building regional coverage with cross-regional support capability, and refining technical hiring criteria to match delivery needs.

Patti Engineering

Director of Indiana Operations

November 2016 – October 2024

Indianapolis, Indiana

CSiA Certified Controls System Integrator; Siemens Solutions Partner; Mitsubishi Electric Authorized System Integrator; Fanuc Robotics Authorized Integrator. Offices in Michigan, Texas, and Indiana.

Held P&L accountability for Indiana regional operations, leading industrial automation integration projects for manufacturing customers from proposal through commissioning, while establishing the Indiana office from inception — securing the location, managing buildout, and growing the engineering team from one to five.

- Delivered 100+ industrial automation integration projects for manufacturing customers across a broad range of industries including automotive — spanning industrial automation & controls, robotics integration, Industry 4.0 / digital transformation, asset tracking & traceability, and engineering studies — managing scope, schedule, and budget throughout.
- Led controls engineering team on a ~\$520K assembly station automation project at Stellantis Kokomo Engine Plant — designing and implementing four fully automated workstations in a unionized facility, achieving 99%+ uptime and eliminating one operator per station per shift across all production shifts.
- Designed and implemented a 12-panel UHF RFID control system for a large-scale Walmart dairy production and distribution facility (food manufacturing) — performing electrical design, supervising panel build and installation, resolving complex technical challenges in a refrigerated environment, and integrating the RFID PLC with Walmart's WMS.
- Led a multi-phase IIoT engagement at Stellantis KTP — connecting CNC and robotic equipment to the Siemens MindSphere cloud platform, delivering analytics and weekly production reporting across a 90-day proof of concept and 6-month subscription engagement, and directing a plant simulation that identified blocked robot service time as the primary driver of unplanned production loss.
- Developed proposals for customer RFQs ranging from under \$10K to over \$10M — evaluating equipment needs, recommending viable solutions, and weighing alternatives such as robotics vs. mechanization, vision vs. fixturing, SCADA vs. distributed PLC, AGV vs. manual, and RFID vs. RTLS, among other technology decisions.
- Conducted formal safety risk assessments including an ANSI B11.0 assessment for a servo-driven blanking press conversion from hydraulic to electric servo actuation.
- Built the Indiana regional operation from inception — identifying and securing the office location, managing full buildout, and growing the engineering team from one to five over six years against a \$250K sustained-sales-per-hire threshold — recovering from COVID-related disruption to achieve peak revenue and utilization rates consistently above 70% in 2023-2024.
- Authored six technical blogs and whitepapers and delivered seven presentations and webinars for industry audiences on IIoT, RFID, and industrial automation topics; served as an Industry Advisor on the IUPUI Electrical & Computer Engineering Technology Industrial Advisory Board.

Fiat Chrysler Automobiles – Kokomo Casting Plant

Plant Controls Engineer

January 2011 – November 2016

Kokomo, Indiana

One of the world's largest automotive casting plants, producing powertrain castings for FCA operations at high volume in a complex UAW unionized environment.

Plant controls engineer at one of the world's largest automotive casting plants, responsible for maintaining and improving production equipment capability and reliability across die cast, machining, and robotic cell operations in a UAW unionized environment — supporting day-to-day troubleshooting, PLC programming and modifications, electrical design, and continuous improvement under the World Class Manufacturing methodology.

- Served as lead controls engineer for the die cast and robotic cell portion of the MY2017 new model program — overseeing and specifying \$13.6M in capital equipment, managing controls architecture decisions, commissioning die cast machine cells, leading safety risk assessments in accordance with FCA Early Equipment Management (EEM) framework, and coordinating cross-functional teams through production launch.
- Executed the plant's adoption of Siemens TIA Portal controls architecture — bringing it into compliance with Powertrain division standards — by designing a train-the-trainer curriculum, establishing an on-site training lab, engaging union representatives, and delivering multi-week cross-shift training for approximately 90 engineers and skilled trades technicians.
- Applied WCM SMED methodology to 12 vertical trim presses (Focused Improvement pillar): performed task-level changeover analysis, redesigned internal/external task structure, specified and coordinated all design changes, secured safety approval, and supervised installation — reducing average changeover time from 36 to 9 minutes (75% reduction), directly improving press utilization and production throughput.

- Delivered quantified WCM kaizens under the Focused Improvement pillar, including: tie bar access redesign (\$2.68M benefit vs. \$225K cost; B:C ratio 11.9); deburr cell safety circuit upgrade to SMI-162 compliance (eliminated 150 min/day of lost production across 3 shifts); PLC core sequence reprogramming enabling new production capability on an existing machine within 10 days (\$12.8K benefit).
- Completed a multi-year tool room modernization project — building the technical and financial justification that secured \$1.38M in capital funding, then specifying equipment, sourcing vendors, and executing procurement — for Sinkers and Wire EDMs, CNC lathes, and ultrasonic cleaning system replacement, improving tooling quality and availability for production operations.
- Assisted other plant engineers with plant electrical substation shutdown maintenance supervision. Created one-line diagrams and performed arc flash calculations for new equipment.

EARLIER CAREER — INDUSTRIAL AUTOMATION & ENGINEERING LEADERSHIP

Manufacturing Technology, Inc. (MTI) — Controls Engineer | South Bend, IN | 2009–2010

- Performed electrical design and PLC/CNC/robotics programming for friction welding machines and their supporting cell equipment (robots, conveyors, safety and sensing systems); completed machine startup, configuration, and commissioning of Allen-Bradley/Rockwell and Fanuc Robotics based systems.

Transbotics Corporation — Products / Project Manager / Project Engineer | Charlotte, NC | 2005–2009

- Managed AGV and AGC projects from sales handoff through service transition for manufacturing and distribution customers — including Graham Packaging, Freightliner, RR Donnelley, Goodyear, and BMW — spanning packaging, automotive, heavy truck, tire, and distribution industries.
- Spearheaded technical integration of a new business unit and its products with existing operations; led day-to-day controls development for a new Automatic Guided Cart product line.

Thomson Displays Mexicana — Sr. Electrical Engineer / Project Manager | Mexicali, Mexico | 2001–2003

- Led a 40+ person multinational cross-functional team in the operational startup of a CRT factory front-end; increased daily production rate from 110 to 4,200 units/day; reduced bottleneck changeover time from 40 hours to 8 hours via SMED (estimated \$300K savings per changeover event).
- Managed 50+ concurrent capital projects in a multicultural environment; negotiated equipment cost reduction from \$600K to \$240K through development of a new Korean vendor; trained maintenance engineers and technicians on ABB robotics programming.

Thomson Consumer Electronics — Project Leader / Member of Technical Staff | Lancaster, PA & Marion, IN | 1997–2001

- Managed a \$15M automated factory module from design through commissioning — leading team selection and hiring, equipment layout design, vendor selection and negotiations, electrical and controls design, budget control, and multi-vendor dispute resolution; designed lean manufacturing equipment and employee layout generating \$1M in cost savings vs. traditional factory layouts.
- Reduced conveyor modification project costs from \$1.4M to \$750K through vendor strategy; cut robotic modification costs from \$40K to \$1,500 using in-house capability; programmed two data tracking systems improving quality control 10% and reducing headcount by five employees.

TECHNICAL SKILLS & PLATFORMS

PLC Platforms	Allen-Bradley/Rockwell (PLC5, SLC500, ControlLogix), Siemens S7/TIA Portal, Omron, Modicon, Mitsubishi
HMI / SCADA	Rockwell FactoryTalk View, Siemens WinCC / TIA Portal, Iconics Genesis64, Inductive Automation Ignition
Networks	EtherNet/IP, Profinet, DeviceNet, ControlNet, Profibus, OT/IT convergence, IEC 62443 cybersecurity
Robotics	Fanuc (Karel/TP+), ABB, KUKA, Hirata — programming, integration, safety zoning, and commissioning
Drives	Siemens S120, Allen-Bradley, Mitsubishi, Danfoss VFDs; Delta Tau servo controllers; motion control

Vision Systems	Keyence CVX, Cognex DS900, Fanuc 3DV iR-Vision; AI-based 3D vision-guided robotics (Apera AI)
RFID / IIoT	UHF RFID systems design and integration; RTLS; IIoT architecture; WMS and ERP interface design
Safety	Safety PLCs, light curtains, interlocks, safety relays, LOTO; ANSI B11.0 and FCA EEM risk assessments
Programming	C, Visual Basic, Python, Java; ladder logic, structured text, function block, SCL
Design Tools	AutoCAD (electrical panel design); SolidWorks (familiarity)
Lean / CI	5S, Kaizen, SMED, SPC, WCM Focused Improvement, WCM Early Equipment Management, Kepner-Tregoe Analytic Troubleshooting (ATS)

EDUCATION

Master of Science, Business Administration — International Business Concentration	2003
<i>San Diego State University, Callexico, CA GPA 3.97/4.00 Graduate Honors Beta Gamma Sigma Business Honor Society</i>	
Bachelor of Science, Electrical Engineering	1996
<i>Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN</i>	

CERTIFICATIONS, LICENSES & PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Professional Engineer (PE), Control Systems — State of Indiana (#PE11700763)
- Certified Automation Professional (CAP) — International Society of Automation (Cert. #100614)
- Certified Vision Professional – Basic (CVP-Basic) — Association for Advancing Automation (A3)
- RFID Associate, Foundational Level — The RFID Professional Institute
- Siemens Certified Application Engineer — SINAMICS S120 & SIMOTICS Motion Control Technology
- Siemens Certified Professional — Industrial Identification RFID-UHF Technology and Practice
- Industrial Cybersecurity: IEC 62443 Introduction — Siemens (via Siemens Solutions Partner Program)
- Cardin Quality Training Associates: Effective Quality Management System Auditing
- Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) — Member
- International Society of Automation (ISA) — Senior Member
- Beta Gamma Sigma — Business Honor Society | Phi Theta Kappa — Honor Society
- Industry Advisor — IUPUI Electrical & Computer Engineering Technology Industrial Advisory Board

SELECTED INDUSTRY PRESENTATIONS & PUBLICATIONS

- "4D Vision Career Fair: Join Apera AI to End Robot Blindness" — A3 Association for Advancing Automation, October 2025
- "PLCs and Other Controllers in an IIoT" — Control Engineering Webcast, November 2021
- "Integrating RFID at Assembly Stations" — Siemens Virtual Conference, October 2019
- "Asset Tracking Options: RTLS or RFID?" — Siemens Automation Summit, Aurora, CO, June 2019
- "Common Considerations Integrating Robotics in Manufacturing" — Patti Engineering Blog/eBook, February 2024