2020 TMA Monitoring Center Excellence Awards
Deadline: Friday April 17, 2020

Part A: Company Information (Required for All Applicants)

Organization Information:

Company Name: Lydia Security Monitoring, Inc.

DBA: **COPS Monitoring**

Address: **1041 Glassboro Rd F2**

City: **Williamstown** State: **NJ**

Zip: **08094** Country: **USA**

Phone: **800-367-2677** Fax

Website: **https://copsmonitoring.com**

Company President/CEO: **Jim McMullen, President**

Award(s) for which you are applying (check all that apply)
☑ **Monitoring Center of the Year**
☐ Manager of the Year
☐ Operator of the Year
☐ Support Person of the Year

Contact for TMA Excellence Awards Applications(s)
Name **David Smith** Title: **VP of Marketing & Business Development**

Phone: **954-545-5708** Email: **dsmith@copsmonitoring.com**

Company Information:

1: Monitoring Center Description

1(a) Year Built: **NJ: 1978 / AZ: 2004 / FL: 2006 / TN: 2011 / TX: 2012 / MD: 2012**

1(b) Last Remodel Date: **NJ: 2019; TX 2015; FL 2014**

1(c) Number of Active Stations: **6 Monitoring Stations, 350 Workstations**

2. Number of Operators

2(a) Number of Full Time Operators: **520**
2(b) Number of Part Time Operators: **65**

3.Number of Supervisors: 68

4. Subscriber Information

4(a) Number of Commercial Subscribers	**15% (About 510,000)**
4(b) Percentage with Supervised Open/Close	**15%**
4(c) Number of Resident Subscribers	**85% (about 2.9 million)**
4(d) Percentage of Non-owned Subscribers	**100% (100% Wholesale)**

5. Types of Signals Monitored (Check all that apply)

✓	5(a) Burglar	✓	5(n) Other - Industrial processes, custom solutions
✓	5(b) Fire		5(m) Cyber
✓	5(c) Video	✓	5(l) Elevator
✓	5(d) PERS	✓	5(k) Connected Home (HVAC, lights, TV, etc)
	5(e) Weather	✓	5(j) Access controls
✓	5(f) Supervisory	✓	5(i) Temperature
✓	5(g) GPS	✓	5(h) Waterflow

6. Types of Communication Technologies (Check all that apply)

✓	6(a) Digital Dialer
✓	6(b) Cellular
✓	6(c) Long-Range Radio
✓	6(d) Internet

7. Additional Monitoring Center Services Providers

✓	7(a) Two Way Voice	7(b) # of Users	**Thousands**
	7(c) Remote Access	7(d) # of Users	**N/A**

8. Your Monitoring Center is Best Described as

8(a) Full Service (monitoring your own installation) Y/N	**No, Wholesale Monitoring Only**
Full Service Plus Contract with other dealers (monitoring own installations)	
8(b) Yes or No	**No, Wholesale Monitoring Only**
8(c) Number of Dealers	**N/A**
8(d) Number of Accounts	**N/A**
Contract (wholesale to dealers) Monitoring Center	
8(e) Yes or No	**Yes**
8(f) Number of Dealers	**3,500**
8(g) Number of Accounts:	**3.4 Million**
8(h) Proprietary Monitoring Center for Company-Owned properties (Y/N)	**No**

9. Monitoring Center Listings

Burglar Alarm Listings	
9(a) CPVX	**N/A**
9(b) CVSG	**N/A**
9(c) CRZH	**N/A**
9(d) CRZM	**N/A**
Fire Alarm Listings	
9(e) UUFX	**N/A**
9(f) UUJS	**N/A**
Monitoring Only Listings	
9(g) CVSU	**BP5100**
9(h) UUFX	**S5087**

10. Monitoring Center NRTL

10. Monitoring Center NRTL File #	**FM Listing 3019439**

11. TMA Five Diamond Status

11(a) TMA Five Diamond Company (Y/N)	**Yes (6 locations, the most in the industry)**
11(b) Date of Five Diamond Certification	**04/01/2014 (first site)**

12. Disaster Recovery

12 Disaster Recovery Plan (Y/N) **Yes, We believe it's the most comprehensive in the industry**

13. Training Programs

TMA Monitoring Center Operator Online 13(a) Y/N **Yes**
13(b) Number of Graduates **Several Hundred**
Internationally Developed
13(c) Y/N **Yes**
13(d) Number of Graduates **All dispatchers**
13(e) Other Various proprietary customer service programs. **Many programs, all designed with the assistance of an Industrial Psychologist.**

14. Monitoring Center Procedure Manual

14(a) Do you have one? Y/N **Yes**
14(b) How often is it updated? **Reviewed monthly. Updated as changes occur.**

15. Signals and Calls Handled

Signals Handled
15(a) Number of Signals/Week **> 5,250,000**
15(b) Number of Signals requiring operator interaction/week **225,000**
15(c) Number of Alarm only signals **> 125,000 per week, > 6 million per year**
Calls Handled
15(d) Number of Weekly inbound calls **> 45,000 (Monitoring center only, does not include dealer support, data entry, tech support, etc.)**
15(e) Number of Weekly outbound calls **> 330,000**

16. Response Time

16 Average response time (measured as the time a signal is received and acknowledged by the automation software until the time an operator begins to dial the first call. If a different method of measurement is used, please describe.)
17.3 Seconds to more than 6 Million Alarms Annually (Using the method described above)

17. Is your company a member of any of the following associations (mark as many as needed) Y/N

17(a) TMA **Yes**
17(b) ESA **Yes**
17(c) SIA **Yes**
17(d) NFPA **Yes**
17(e) Local/State Association **Yes, 10+ states**
17(f) Other **AICC, FARA, MAMA, SIAC**

Part B: Monitoring Center of the Year Applicants Only

Company Name: COPS Monitoring

Complete, detailed answers are necessary for the judges to thoughtfully review your application.

NRTL Listings and Certifications (5 points)

1. How does your company use the distinction of its FM Global, Intertek/ETL or UL listing in its marketing program?

Surprisingly, not all monitoring companies invest the time, effort, or expense in a listing from any NRTL agency, but the same companies are quick to make the claim they would be able to meet the minimum requirements. COPS places a high value on having these trusted independent agencies setting, maintaining, and regulating important standards for central stations.

We believe the marks of our industry's agencies are part of our identity and just as important to us as our company logo because they demonstrate a steadfast commitment to quality. NRTL listings not only benefit individual companies but also the industry as a whole and ultimately the consumers they are designed to help protect. This is why the UL & FM logos are prominently displayed on every piece of company marketing including our website, print advertising, business cards, product/service info sheets, and more.

2. If your company is a TMA Five Diamond Company, how does it use the distinction of its TMA Five Diamond designation to better position itself in the marketplace?

We believe that the TMA Five Diamond Certification is our industry's most prestigious certification because it places a focus on our industry's most precious resource: PEOPLE. Immediately following our Five Diamond Certification years ago, we began to advertise our Five Diamond distinction by including the Five Diamond logo on our dealer communications, print and electronic advertising (ads, videos, etc.), trade show banners and graphics, direct mail, and on our website. We also have a custom plaque in each of our monitoring centers that show our TMA dispatcher graduates.

Today, we are honored to have the most TMA Five Diamond certified monitoring stations in the industry (6 total) as well as hundreds of Five Diamond graduates. What's important is that our educated dealer and consumers also recognize the value of our Five Diamond certification, and ask about our certification.

We have also run ads that prominently display our TMA afflation and 5 Diamond Status.

Disaster-Recovery Plan (5 points)

3. Please provide a brief overview of your company's documented disaster-recovery plan. When was this plan adopted, and when was it last reviewed?

Even a short period of downtime in our industry can be catastrophic, which is why our goal is to go over and above NTRL requirements regarding "disaster recovery" to deliver "failsafe" monitoring.

Our disaster planning began 19 years ago as the tragic events on 9/11 caused us to consider more carefully how we would provide continuity of services in the event catastrophic loss of our only monitoring station (at the time). While the standards and safeguards that are required by our industry's governing agencies dictate a good minimum standard for single-site monitoring companies to follow, we felt that they do not fully address the total loss of a facility. As a result, we built a second site in

Scottsdale, Arizona and opened it less than 18 months later in 2004. Over the next several years, we continued to strengthen our redundancy by opening additional UL listed monitoring stations. Each time we opened a new monitoring station; we reduced the dependence on the others and greatly increased our ability to recover in the event of a disaster. We now have a total of 6 UL listed monitoring stations nationwide. All 6 are networked, staffed 24/7, and actively share in handling the alarm traffic in real-time. This way, redundancy is built-in – there's no "backup plan" to enact.

From a signaling standpoint, we have mission-critical technology (receivers, automation, communications, etc.) deployed at multiple sites and utilize several IP/telephone carriers, telecom facilities, and diverse routes to our facilities (both underground and above ground fed from different telephone carrier COs). If these local layers of communications or equipment redundancy fail (backup receiver hardware, backup power, etc.), our geo-diverse central stations allow us to redirect signal traffic to another location to overcome any local outage impacting a single facility. We can do this for inbound IP and telephone traffic, receiver outages, telephone switch failures, network failures, and even a major automation system failure. Recently, we invested in state-of-the art Meraki switches and firewalls from Cisco, the most prominent networking company on the planet. Now, through the Meraki hardware, each location connected to our monitoring and telephone equipment has the real-time capability to utilize any of their 3 connections as needed – and without interruption – to an alarm screen or active telephone call to your customer or the local authorities. This way, if one connection goes down, all calls and alarms in process will fail over – and will continue uninterrupted. Meraki does this automatically by using secure failover SD-WAN (Software Defined Wide Area Network) features that are designed to allow our network to dynamically adjust to changing conditions without the need for manual intervention. SD-WAN technology ensures optimal performance for critical applications and helps to avoid disruptions of highly performance-sensitive traffic, such as phone calls and alarms.

While losing the ability for a single site to monitor is possible, our experience has proven that what's more probable and the most common threat to maintaining quality of service are 'local conditions.' Hurricanes, snowstorms, floods, and other severe weather generally wreak havoc on other monitoring companies because of the logistical and safety concerns of getting employees to work during extreme conditions coupled with increased alarm activity the conditions tend to create. This essentially means that backup, fail-over, and redundancy relies on more than "just" technology – ***it also relies on PEOPLE.*** For instance, no monitoring company can properly support 100% of their customer base and provide acceptable response times with just 50% of their staff. However, this is exactly what happens if a company with just 2 locations loses the ability to monitor at 1 site. ***After all, professional monitoring is performed by people.***

At COPS, we have solved this problem by diversifying an average of 16.7% of our staffing across all 6 sites. Therefore, if something unexpected were to happen to 1 of our monitoring stations, we still have roughly 80% of our staff at our other 5 locations ready to handle alarm traffic. Plus, we have the ability to over-staff each of the 5 sites to compensate. This strategy made COPS better prepared for something like COVID-19, since our staffing is separated in 6 different states. *(Side note: we also created employee separate within each office and observed strict CDC sanitation guidelines during COVID-19)*

No other wholesale monitoring company matches this level of redundancy.

When we can anticipate issues that may affect staffing (hurricane, blizzard, other severe weather, etc.) we proactively over-staff our other networked monitoring stations to handle the additional workload. As a result, our response times usually get better – as opposed to other monitoring companies whose response times usually increase significantly.

The plan is reviewed monthly, updated as needed, and utilized all year long as our normal way of monitoring.

In addition to the extreme lengths we go through to provide redundancy for business continuity due to unanticipated outage, we also feel that we are setting new standards by protecting against potential outages from something more deliberate and malicious: cybercrime. Cybercrime is a growing and perpetual threat. Each year, we hear about more data breaches. The Equifax breach alone a few years ago put sensitive data for 145 million Americans at risk.

To ensure we adhere to the highest standards, we hired an outside firm to perform a Service Organization Control (SOC) 2 Type 2 attestation engagement report. The audit is an extremely demanding process that tests a company's systems security, availability, processing integrity, confidentiality, and privacy (including HIPAA). Our SOC 2 certification which confirms that our controls and operating effectiveness all meet or exceed the highest standards – and continue to do so over time. *(We are the only monitoring company with a SOC 2 certification).* We also work with RiskSense and other leading companies to perform random penetration tests on our firewalls, building security, data encryption, and to give us complete threat and vulnerability assessments. We don't believe any other central station in the industry that goes through such lengths to protect its dealer and subscriber data.

Lastly, we recently added new generators at our NJ facility that provide enough electricity to power 100 homes, 20 Home Depot Stores, or the most critical wings of 2 major hospitals. We've also upgraded the UPS systems and generators in some of our other locations.

Hiring Criteria (5 points)

4. How does your Monitoring Center attract and qualify the right employees? How does your company solicit new employees?

Technology, redundancy, reliability, and fast response times are obviously important, but what customers depend on most is a trained caring professional on the other end of the line.

Qualifying someone as the "right person" to be a successful dispatcher is determined by more than education, experience, and attitude: we believe that COPS dispatchers must also have the proper blend of professionalism, personality attributes, ability, and sense of duty. In order to identify these traits, applicants are screened with a proprietary personality profile that we developed through an Industrial Psychologist trained on how to best match individuals' traits to the specific job roles at COPS. Being a successful dispatcher requires a specific personality and skill set. Our 6 monitoring stations gives us a unique advantage by giving us the ability to find talented employees in 6 different employment markets, rather than being forced to settle or trying to find nearly 600 dispatchers in a single job market. Before hiring, we also perform extensive employment checks, background investigations, and drug testing on every new hire and have an ongoing random drug test policy.

The goal of personality profiling and skills testing is to identify dispatchers who thrive on helping people and who love to be dispatchers and go out of their way to go above and beyond for our dealers and their customers. We further encourage this culture of service excellence by creating a unique, desirable workplace. This is at the very core of our success and the reason that the main source of our new candidates is through existing employee referrals and why we have been able to continually attract candidates to keep up with our explosive growth over the past several years.

5. What types of incentive programs are used to motivate and retain qualified employees?

We place an extraordinary amount of importance on people, and we believe our key to success is attracting, qualifying, and then RETAINING the right type of people. We believe the way we select, train, recognize, and reward our employees is the reason why 96% of our upper-level positions are filled by employees that once started in entry-level positions.

We have tremendous appreciation for being a lifeline at the very moment that they need us most, and we strive to ensure our friendly, caring, professionals are prepared for any situation. In fact, all of our redundancy, failover, and disaster recovery efforts are designed with a single goal: To ensure we have the right person in the right place when customers need us most.

We exercise extraordinary measures to pinpoint the right candidates because we expect a lot from them. Candidates endure our proprietary and extremely rigorous "up or out" evaluation system called Gradation. The proprietary program does two things: 1) helps us identify and purge employees who do not fit within our culture of working to a high level of excellence and 2) improves retention of those that are the very best in their roles. The system is designed to be tough, but also designed to create a continual forward-moving reward system for the first 18 months of employment. Gradation is extremely detail-oriented; however, the complete details of the program are proprietary.

Successful employees enjoy flexible hours, excellent health benefits, vacation time, tuition reimbursement, gym membership discounts, AAA membership, 401(k) with a generous company match, regular pay increases, periodic and annual bonuses, discounts on computer equipment and cell phones, along with some other unique incentives to ensure our employees stay sharp, motivated, and excited about COPS and the work they perform.

Our most successful employee incentive program is "Club 6." Every alarm dispatcher is eligible to participate in this club, our reward program for the experienced dispatchers at COPS. It takes about 18 months to qualify for Club 6 and employees must continue to pass their quarterly reviews. Employees who qualify for the program are rewarded with a day trip paid for by company each quarter. A large percentage of our staff are members are a part of Club 6, which means 4 times a year, they enjoy unique excursions with the other members. The excursions include things like trips to amusement parks, sporting events, plays, museums, trips to the city, lavish dinners. Club 6 members are also entitled to bring a guest – and the company covers the entire expense.

Operations shift managers that run the shifts of dispatchers on a day-to-day basis, are rewarded with two Shift Manager Retreats each year paid for by the company. EVERY shift manager from all of our sites attends and they get to bring a guest. Some of the destinations our shift managers have experienced on these multi-day retreats are Las Vegas, the Colorado Rockies, Disney World, the Bahamas, Mexico, and Aruba.

The trips are designed to be a balance of work and play. The trips are an excellent team-building program for the company and help to ensure our 6 are properly using our proprietary Gradation program and work together seamlessly.

We also have additional trips and events throughout to the year including company picnics, holiday parties, and our annual Founder's Day where we close the general office and send the entire staff out on a day trip to celebrate another year in business that was a result of our employees' hard work and dedication.

Another incentive is that we believe in promoting from within our ranks. Every training team member, floor supervisor, shift manager, site manager, director, and several executives ALL started out as alarm

dispatchers with COPS. We have several other managers, IT team members, a VP, and an EVP who have all started at base level positions within the organization and have been at COPS for decades.

Training & Continuing Education (15 points)

6. Describe the training that your monitoring center offers to monitoring center staff, both initially as well as ongoing training. Include the following information:

(a) The length of your training program

In addition, to being TMA Five Diamond Certification at a certain point, each dispatcher goes through a minimum of 120 hours of classroom and off-line training, followed by many hours of tandem training where they are paired with an experienced dispatcher who supervises and helps them respond to specific types of alarms.

Then, they continue through the initial 18-month Gradation program described in the previous question. (Gradation continues throughout their entire tenure as a dispatcher). As we stated previously, Gradation is extremely detail-oriented and we believe it is the most comprehensive ongoing training program in the industry. All employees, regardless of the length of employment, receive ongoing skills training and cross-department training.

(b) What training methods are used (i.e., classroom, video, hands-on, etc.)?

We utilize classroom training, video, role-playing, and hands-on training.

(c) How do you determine whether a trainee has successfully completed the program?

Depending on their level of Gradation, dispatchers are tested and evaluated on a monthly (initially) or quarterly basis (throughout their entire tenure as a dispatcher). Many applicants don't make it through the Gradation process. This continual training and evaluation process of Gradation ensures that only employees who are interested in becoming experts in their field are permitted to interact with dealers, customers, and handle alarms on an ongoing basis.

Quality of Recordkeeping and Performance Data (10 points)

7. How does your monitoring center quantify its performance? List up to three updates that have made your monitoring center operations more successful?

We closely and measure our performance to ensure quality, speed, accuracy, and adherence to standards and procedures. We have multiple qualitative measurements within the organization, but three of the most important are as follows:

1. Alarm response time: Having a consistently reliable response time average fosters confidence with our customers. We monitor our response times on a real-time basis, and we consistently maintain an average of 18 seconds or less (on alarm events). To give an example of scale, our average response time in the last 12 months to more than 6 Million alarms was just 17.3 Seconds. We believe we're the only monitoring company that publishes its alarm signals online (on our home page).

2. Productivity Levels: We continually monitor dispatcher productivity levels to ensure we maintain the <u>optimal</u> staffing levels and an appropriate level of workload for each dispatcher. We know that overworked employees will not deliver the levels of service that have the proper balance between friendliness and professionalism. Conversely, neither will under-worked staff as they become

distracted, bored and unengaged. Maintaining a properly balanced productivity level is a key factor in helping us to produce our desired alarm response time and quality of service on which our dealers and customers depend.

3. Founded Inquiry Ratio: To monitor quality, accuracy, and adherence to standards and procedures COPS' team of programmers developed a proprietary database and tracking system to measure error ratios based on end-user and dealer inquiries, random alarm event inspections, and random call recording reviews. This system helps us to ensure that that any potential problems are exceptions and are properly addressed before they have a chance to become systemic. We measure our error rate against every 10,000 alarm activations, and charting this data helps us to easily identify trends that need to be addressed through systemic system improvements or staff education.

Adoption of New Technologies/Monitoring Center-Based Services (10 points)

8.Which of these technologies does your monitoring center offer? (Mark all that are appropriate.)

✓	Alternate means of signal reception (other than POTS) – please specify **IP, Proprietary API, Cellular, Radio**
✓	Monitoring center-based access control.
✓	Two-way voice monitoring and live conversations with CS operators.
✓	Monitoring center- based video services.
✓	Remote monitoring with mobile services.
✓	Automated dispatching to 911 centers (ASAP to PSAP). ***COPS is a charter member of the ASAP to PSAP program and helped fund the research, development, and implementation of the system. However, until recently not enough cities have invested in the integration to make a material difference. We are in the final stages of integrating ASAP to PSAP by and plan to launch this year.***
✓	Other – please specify: GPS Tracking & MPERS. We are building an operations center dedicated to PERS and MPERS. Dispatchers will also receive specialized training including HIPAA, CPR and more. [We have dedicated PERS & MPERS Monitoring Centers]
✓	E-mail alerts or mobile text messages.

Relationships with Responding Authorities (15 points)

9. What is your monitoring center doing to preserve and/or improve its relationship with responding authorities?

COPS places significant value on its relationship with AHJs throughout the industry. We are active in various state-level associations and interact with authorites throughout the country on a regular basis. We often host our own dealer meetings at our 6 locations and invite association representatives and AHJs to attend. We have also sponsored AHJ events. We are members of TMA, SIAC, ESA, and AICC to further our support of the industry and its relationships.

10. What false dispatch procedures are currently in place in your monitoring center? (Please provide statistics demonstrating the effectiveness of these procedures.)

COPS takes false alarm prevention seriously and offers several false dispatch prevention and mitigation measures.

COPS also offers a service called "Suspended dispatch" that can remove the dispatch instructions and telephone numbers from accounts for the first several days when a new account goes online with us. This allows new customers to learn and interact with their systems without the fear of dispatching. After the initial learning period, when customers are comfortable using their systems, the dispatch instructions and numbers are automatically added to the account. A dealer may elect to activate dispatch suspension on all new accounts, or individual accounts as they deem necessary.

COPS is an IQ-certified company, and we support ECV (Enhanced call verification) of up to four numbers before dispatching authorities. We educate our dealers on modified alarm handling techniques on repeated zone trips, we have duplicate signal suppression rules to prevent repetitive dispatches, and we strongly pursue dealers to fix accounts in excessive activity and/or runaway status. In fact, we even charge dealers for excessive activity if the issues are not addressed the same day.

COPS produced web-based video tutorials to assist with dealer education and to properly enter and edit accounts.

We provide complimentary end-user literature to our dealers. For instance, we have one called "Knowing Your Monitoring Station" leave-behind brochure that educates the alarm users on our procedures and terminology and in an effort to reduce false alarms.

We have a team dedicated to proactively review alarm dealer activity to identify ways to modify alarm response to improve the customer experience and reduce false alarms.

We have reports and regularly send notification to dealers for their most active accounts in the attempts to reduce false alarms.

11. What industry technologies, products, standards and guidelines are you using in the monitoring center to reduce false dispatches?

We recently launched a service called MyAlarm.Chat – a secure SMS & virtual group chat room experience that provides immediate alarm notification and the ability for alarm users to communicate to make informed decisions about canceling or escalating alarm signals – all through the app.

We have an Electronic Cancel program that allows an end-user can send a cancel signal to prevent a false dispatch.

We utilize several proprietary tools in our monitoring software to identify and modify handling on high activity accounts.

We have expanded our line of products that we support for video verification and deploy other methods and procedures dictated through our IQ certification and ECV help to reduce false alarms (see #10 for other details).

Relationships with Customers (15 points)

Describe how your monitoring center/company measures the effectiveness, accuracy, speed and professionalism of end-user communications between operators and customers or responding authorities.

We regularly (and randomly) review voice recordings from each dispatcher to closely monitor the professionalism, speed, and accuracy. We also review alarm events for response time, time between actions, and accuracy of response.

Our training program is continually being updated to include both good and bad examples of telephone calls and signal handling events to educate our employees on the level of excellence our customers expect.

Please also refer to answers to question #7 that address performance.

Role of Monitoring Center in the Company's Overall Business Strategy (10 points)

12. The role of the monitoring center is different among installing companies, proprietary Monitoring Centers and contract monitoring centers and thus, may affect different areas of the business, such as sales, technical operations and customer service. How is your Monitoring Center integrated into other aspects of the company's business?

Professional monitoring, the monitoring center and our dispatchers are our product – the core of everything we do, and the reason all of the other departments exists.

In addition to monitoring, we servicing more than 3,500 alarm dealers nationwide with a wide array of needs. One of our longstanding company slogans is "Your foundation for growth," which means that we make it a core focus to help our dealers be more successful. Our business model of being 100% wholesale places our success as being squarely dependent on our Dealers' success. The redundancy, reliability, professionalism and speed of service that our 6 monitoring centers provide are at the center of this focus.

We further support our dealers with our monitoring centers by holding training and seminars at each of our 6 locations to educate them on new equipment, changing regulations, software enhancements, and other items and how to leverage them to help them be more successful. We also educate our dealers on pitfalls in the industry, help them understand licensing requirements, and create a venue where dealers can share best practices and develop relationships with our local staff. In addition to seminars, we often host training at our locations for manufacturer and state/local association training.

Starting in 2017 and continuing into 2020, we held GYB (Grow Your Business) seminars throughout the company and the country. The free seminar gives dealers real-world and practical solutions that they can start using the very next day to improve their business.

COPS also offers several "back office" support services, including direct billing, after-hours messaging, end-user marketing materials (pre- and post-sale), and an industry-leading smartphone, tablet, and computer access that is designed for end-user subscribers (for reviewing alarm history, call list contacts, system testing, and other features). The end-user access is private labeled with the dealer's logo and colors.

Through strategic alliances, we offer our dealers the opportunity to get the capital they need through unique dealer/funding programs, improve their image with professional website development, business cards, expert marketing materials, and discounts on many things they need to run their business such as employment ads and offices supplies, and many brands of hardware.

We also have a longstanding relationship with SS&Si do give only COPS dealers discounts on equipment, office supplies, employment ads and access to professional marketing support. Through this relationship, dealers are able to purchase equipment at $0 down and pay for it over time in their COPS monitoring bill. This "Equalizer Program" is designed to help dealers compete with the no/low cost systems with simultaneously improving cash flow.

During the COVID-19 shutdown, we also launched a Do It Together program with SS&Si so dealers can offer self-install systems with professional alarm dealer guidance over the phone and video chat.

Involvement with Industry Groups (5 points)

13. With which industry groups are monitoring center employees involved (e.g., state and national alarm associations, listing agencies and response agency associations, etc.)? List two positive outcomes of this interaction.

We are members and actively involved in state and local associations in the states where we have monitoring stations (NJ, FL, AZ, TN, TX, and MD) and some surrounding states. We are also members of ESA, CSAA, SIA, SIAC, and TMA. COPS employees have also served on industry committees and boards, have contributed to the creation of several industry standards, and spoken on several panels for various industry groups.

Two positive outcomes as the result of our involvement with various agencies are:

1. We have assisted in creating a video standard for the industry (participation from Jim McMullen, COPS President)
2. We have helped launch a new committee within the TMA, the Contract Monitoring Council.

Additional Information (5 points)

14. Why does your company deserve to win the TMA Monitoring Center of the Year Award?

We're not sure "deserves" is really the right term, because we're not sure we entitled. We can say, however, that COPS cares deeply about this industry, our dealers, and the customers we help to protect. We're truly committed to providing industry-leading services and helping to drive the industry further.

We believe our values, our commitment to excellence, and to this industry have helped us become the largest wholesale monitoring company in North America; and even though we have more than 4 decades of monitoring experience and we're larger than our 3+ closest competitors combined, we don't rest on our laurels. Instead, we go to work every day with the same energy and drive to be the best that we had when we were a small, single location central station.

From our 6 locations, we monitor more than 3.4 million subscribers through 3,500 alarm companies across the country. We continue to place great emphasis on the quality of service we produce, and we realize the fruits of our labor are experienced from many different perspectives. We have various stakeholders besides our company ownership, and we have never *(nor will we ever)* put the profitability of the business above the operational needs of the company necessary to fulfill our mission and our obligation as a lifeline to millions. We recognize that our employees, end-user subscriber customers, alarm dealer customers, critical equipment suppliers, industry suppliers, AHJs, various associations, and many others as well all depend on us to be a good citizen.

We continually reinvest a tremendous amount of time, money, and energy back into our company and employees with the goal of making COPS the best monitoring company in the industry. Still, monitoring is often time viewed as a commodity, which couldn't be further from the truth.

As an industry leader - we believe it's our duty to be a positive role model for other monitoring companies by setting a positive example and we would be honored to be recognized by the TMA as this year's Central Station of the year, and we thank you for your consideration.

15. Please list the activities in which your monitoring center is involved that contribute to the betterment of your community.

As a company, COPS Monitoring host blood drives, attend / host charitable fund raisers, participate in "toys for tots," serve as sponsors for youth sport teams and leagues, donate to families during the holidays through local churches and charities (Thanksgiving, gifts for Christmas), support Mission 500 at ISC West through sponsorships (we are the official timing sponsor of the Security 5K).

For the past several years COPS has partnered with Mission 500 to support a local Title I elementary school by providing each student with school supplies (press releases on our website), and we also offer "open houses," sponsor local youth programs, and support political needs of the industry at large.

Employees at each of our 6 monitoring locations organize giving and support to local organizations and charities throughout the year.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we donated laptops to a VA Memorial Home so its quarantined elderly residents could be reunited with their loved ones through video chat (press release on our website).

Just a note: In the past, we were really reluctant in announcing our altruistic efforts because it's not in our nature to draw the spotlight for certain acts. In recent years, we began to publicize some of our involvement because we believe many people want to help, but either don't know how, or are uninspired. We publish our efforts under the intention of leading by example and in the hopes up inspiring others to act in kind.