



Renee Prager, President and CEO, Brinco Mechanical Management Services, Inc.



Ron Prager, Vice President and COO, Brinco Mechanical Management Services, Inc.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED IN FM?

Ron: 25+ years as a single trade vendor.

Renee: 20+ years.

WHY WERE YOU INTERESTED IN FM?

Ron: Brinco began as a local NY Commercial HVAC/R service company and at the behest of our retail clients, expanded into a National HVAC/R Management Company servicing multisite accounts. HVAC has always been a pain-point for managers of all types of facilities. As a mechanical engineer, and a certified HVAC technician, I understand the impact mechanical systems have on the overall client experience.

Renee: I became interested in FM and joined PRSM 20 years ago when recognition of the FM industry as a profession was at its start. At that time, facility managers were being challenged to expand their skill sets to include knowledge of risk management, budgeting and finance, and software applications. I felt my background as an attorney would be useful to the organization during its formative years. I have served two terms on PRSM's Board of Directors, and have seen the continued expansion of the facilities management industry.

WHAT IS THE MOST INTERESTING FM TASK YOU HAVE BEEN ASKED TO DO?

Ron: Finding solutions for long-term HVAC issues where others have tried and failed is most rewarding to me, on both the service and the design side of the business.

Renee: I find dealing with clients' budgetary constraints, reporting requirements and development of strategic programs to preserve their HVAC assets exciting. HVAC is a high-profile area within facilities management requiring specialized trade expertise. We all know that facilities management is considered a cost center, not a profit center for our clients.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN BENEFITS YOU GET FROM BEING A PRSM MEMBER?

Renee: PRSM provides us with opportunities to visit with our clients and our peers, exchange new ideas and discuss changes in the FM space.

Ron: We also benefit from retailers being able to network with each other.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE ENTERING THE FM INDUSTRY?

Renee: Listen to everyone but always draw your own conclusions, and never stop learning.

Ron: Ask questions. That drives the increased professional knowledge and allows you to learn from the experience of others.

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES TO THE FM INDUSTRY AND WHY?

Renee: Repurposing overbuilt space. My definition of retail is any space where a consumer visits to purchase goods or services, whether it be a restaurant, healthcare center, or financial center. Retail space has been overbuilt by approximately 20 percent. How will those areas be repurposed based on the changing economic climate, and the shift of consumers to experiential based consumerism vs. goods based consumerism? Which industry disrupters and leaders will take advantage of those properties?

Ron: I agree, and I think that dealing with the fallout due to the repurposing is the major challenge for FMs. How does a retail facility manager make a business case for investing in and replacing an HVAC system that should have been replaced years ago if they don't know how long they'll be occupying the space due to a short lease term or the unknown viability of that retail center? ●