

NEW GENIE PRESIDENT

NEW PRODUCT LINE

NEW INNOVATION CENTER

Get the scoop in this exclusive interview with Michael Noyes

By Vicki Jones, Editor

Editor's note:

The Genie Company's new President and CEO Michael Noyes may be new to the garage door industry, but in just a few months he has already proven himself to be an accessible, visible, and inspiring leader. D+AS had the opportunity to interview Noyes, and we gained a great deal of knowledge about him and the plethora of projects and products in the pipeline for Genie.

When did you officially take on the role of President and CEO of Genie?

I assumed the role on January 1, 2024. I had the opportunity to transition into the position over the course of several months, benefiting from a comprehensive handover process from my predecessor Mike Kridel.

Is Mike Kridel staying on in any capacity with Genie?

After serving as President of Genie for 13 years, Mike announced his retirement in the fourth quarter and retired in December 2023. He will continue to serve as a consultant for the company.

How has the transition been?

There was a lengthy 100-day window when Mike and I were working together, which was a nice change. It made the transition very smooth.

Every industry has its own unique DNA. I know that as a leader coming into a new industry I need to be respectful of where the industry is and learn about it before making changes. My aim is to introduce strategic improvements while valuing our customers' contributions and loyalty.

What interested you in working in the garage door market?

Garage doors present opportunity. Since they

are moving mechanical systems used often to access the home there is the possibility for things to go wrong, and it's important to have a way to identify and resolve issues. The latest garage door technologies offer innovative solutions to troubleshoot issues, and they offer selling potential for dealers.

People don't like surprises so it's important to get the customer out in front of potential problems. For example, a dealer may recommend that a homeowner replace an outdated battery backup system. It's easier to justify preventative maintenance and be proactive if we have technology in place to help make it more predictable.

So far, has anything surprised you about the industry?

It's been eye-opening. When I first looked at Genie I thought we already have a very broad market. Now I recognize that there is way more opportunity for growth and a lot more products and potential markets to expand on and/or untap.

It's not a consolidated industry. There are a lot of players and more diverse customers than the industries I've worked in previously.

How has your background helped prepare you for working in this industry?

My experience in managing manufacturing processes and optimizing operations across different product lines translates well.

Throughout my career, I've gained insights into leveraging technology to enhance product development, improve performance, and stay ahead of market trends. This perspective is invaluable in the door and access industry, where advancements in automation, IoT (Internet of Things), and safety features are driving innovation.

Whether working in aerospace, refrigeration, or consumer electronics, customer satisfaction has always been paramount. Understanding customer needs, delivering superior products and services, and building long-lasting relationships applies to every industry.

You seem to be a very hands-on and visible leader. Is that a priority for you?

Absolutely. Since taking on the position, I've hit the ground running. I have been attending trade shows, scheduling customer and dealer visits, and have tried to make myself available after hours through phone calls.

I also participated as a guest speaker in a "Meet the President of Genie" webinar hosted by Stephanie Garcia. We marketed it on social media to reach as many people as possible.

My goal is to introduce myself to the industry face to face, over the phone, etc., so that I am visible and accessible to our customers. This has been a priority for me in every leadership role I've held. It's just who I am.

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What are your top goals for Genie during your first two years?

One of my top goals will be an investment in the residential and commercial operator platforms. Future-proofing the platform so Genie is ready to adopt new technology in the next 10 years.

Our commitment to quality remains unwavering. At Genie, we're dedicated to maintaining our 24VDC platform for residential operators, and we're actively seeking additional ways to enhance value for our professional channel.



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Does Genie have any immediate expansion plans?

There is a broad range of new growth opportunities, and we will be methodical in our growth planning. The key is to be careful where you invest and how fast you move into new markets.

We will continue to branch out further into adjacent markets, such as security access and property management, while also tapping into new markets like the gate industry.

Yes, Genie introduced its new gate operators at IDAExpo. What prompted the company's decision to enter the gate operator market? And why now?

The decision is both strategic and timely. The growing market, combined with the success of our Aladdin Connect and IoT strategy, aligns perfectly with consumer demand for an app that seamlessly integrates with all major smart home and property solutions.

The expansion is a natural progression of our product line. Our U.S.-based engineering team collaborates closely with North American customers, allowing us to offer a more robust, capable, and reliable product that stands out from the competition.

Can you briefly describe the new gate product offerings?

We will offer a comprehensive family of gate

products designed to meet the majority of market needs. We will be introducing linear actuator, articulated arm, and slide gate operators — available in both residential and commercial versions.

Our extensive beta testing and customer feedback have been overwhelmingly positive. We anticipate a successful launch later this year with initial low-rate production.

How did Expo attendees respond to the new gate operator product line?

The response was phenomenal. Our customers have long anticipated Genie's entry into the gate operator market. They praised the installer-friendly interface, which is rich in options and customization features for homeowners.

The enthusiastic reception is a testament to the trust and confidence customers have in Genie products.

How does Genie differentiate from its competitors?

First and foremost, our operations are rooted in the United States. Genie is headquartered in the U.S., and we proudly manufacture our products both in the U.S. and along the U.S. border in Mexico, which contributes to employment opportunities on both sides.

Second, we are one of the first manufacturers to move to 24VDC-powered residential openers. This provides customers with a powerful, high-cycle, and longer-lasting option.

Lastly, we continue to place an emphasis on core products and consistency of products while focusing on innovation and future automation.



Which category of products will be a primary target for innovation?

Given the increasing connectivity and adoption of IoT devices in residential settings I would say residential garage door operators. As consumers continue to embrace smart home technology, there is a growing demand for garage door operators that seamlessly integrate into connected ecosystems.

How do you balance demands for innovation with what the everyday customer wants?

Balance is a challenge, but all good leaders must have balance. Manage the now, the near, and the far. The market will send us signals as to when we need to pivot and change our strategy.

I always say, "The customer doesn't know what they want until you show it to them." But the key is not to introduce too much too fast. If a customer is enamored by a product or feature but can't see the value, they won't want to invest in it.

Five years from now, what three product features do you think will dominate the industry?

1. Smart Connectivity: Garage door openers will increasingly feature seamless integration with smart home ecosystems, allowing users to control them remotely via smartphone apps or voice assistants.
2. Artificial Intelligence (AI) Integration: AI-powered features, such as predictive maintenance and personalized settings, will become more prevalent.

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▼ The company was honored with the Product Innovation Award at Expo for its enhanced Bench Sentry product.



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- 3. Energy Efficiency: We'll see more energy-efficient designs and features, eco-friendly materials, energy-saving modes, and intelligent energy management systems to reduce environmental impact and operating costs for users.

What do you consider a manufacturer's primary role with regards to its dealers?

Establishing a true partnership based on mutual respect and aligned economic interests, as well as a dedication to building "must-have products" that resonate with your customers.

How has your experience helped prepare you for working with Genie's network of dealers?

My previous roles have given me insights into the dynamics of dealer relationships, such as understanding the importance of trust, expertise, and customer service excellence. I also learned how to navigate multiple OEMs.

My experience in Mexico and South America with Carrier dealers provided insights into international market dynamics, including cultural considerations, ethical standards, and service expectations.

Can you elaborate on the purpose of the new Genie Innovation Center that opened on Apr. 1?

The Innovation Center will serve as the epicenter for our engineers, technicians, and researchers to push the boundaries of what's possible in door and access control design. The establishment of the Innovation Center stems from a strategic decision to centralize research, development, and innovation efforts within the company.

What are the goals for the facility?

The primary goal is to accelerate the pace of innovation within Genie. By providing state-of-the-art facilities and resources, the center aims to facilitate collaboration among engineers, technicians, and researchers to develop cutting-edge door and access control designs. At Genie, we like to say that the innovation center is where we take a good idea and make it a great idea.



▲ New Genie Innovation Center

Did Genie recruit new employees for the center?

There are 50 to 55 engineers in the greater Dallas region working specifically on innovation projects. The makeup of the center's employees is a combination of new hires along with a strong core group of existing engineers from Genie, Horton, and Overhead Door.

Why did you build the Innovation Center in Dallas?

Not only is Dallas home to our Overhead Door Corporate Headquarters, but it is also a prominent hub for technology and innovation, offering access to a diverse talent pool, established industry networks, and proximity to leading universities and research institutions.

Additionally, the central location within the United States makes it convenient for collaboration with dealers, partners, and customers across the country.

Is this the first Innovation Center (or similar facility) in the industry?

We are proud to be the first in the U.S. Our decision to innovate here is driven by our commitment to serving our customers where they are. We prioritize being present and accessible for them. As a U.S.-based company, we take immense pride in investing in America and its workforce. We refrain from outsourcing and strive to provide high-paying jobs and foster an award-winning culture.

The majority of our software development takes place in Dallas and is led by our team of U.S.-based software engineers. This setup fosters direct interaction and enhances communication and collaboration. Having our engineers on U.S. soil is a rarity in the current landscape.

How was the grand opening?

It was an exciting milestone for Genie. We had suppliers from all over the world attend. One supplier travelled all the way from Shanghai to be there.

Since the launch, we've seen a lot of social media buzz and requests to connect

with us. When you put something of that degree out there, it becomes a beacon. Businesses want to support and learn more. ■



MICHAEL NOYES: BACKGROUND

Work experience

President at The Genie Company
Sep. 2023 - Current

Vice President and General Manager at Carrier Transcold Truck Trailer Refrigeration
2020 - 2023

Vice President and General Manager at Honeywell
2018 - 2020

Vice President and General Manager at Prysman
2015 - 2018

CFM56 and LEAP Senior Program Manager at GE Aerospace
2012 - 2015

Sourcing Manager at GE Aerospace
2009 - 2012

Six Sigma Black Belt at GE Aerospace
2007 - 2009

Commercial Program Leader at GE Aerospace
2005 - 2007

Large Engine Assembly Cell Leader / Configuration Control at GE Aerospace
2003 - 2005

Technical Sales Leadership Program at GE
2002 - 2003

Engineering Co-op at GE Aerospace
1998 - 2002

Education

Master of Business Administration at University of Notre Dame

Bachelor of Science at University of Cincinnati

Activities and interests

My hobbies and interests encompass a diverse range, from tinkering with cars, trucks, and side-by-side UTVs, to indulging in the thrill of off-roading adventures. Additionally, I find joy in investing, exploring new destinations with my family, and soaring through the skies as an FAA instrument-rated pilot.