



NITL Emerging Leader Profile: Keith Nestman

Meet Keith Nestman: Director of Marketing & Client Engagement, Escalation Consultants, Inc.

For Keith Nestman, success has never been about following a straight path. Instead, it has been about diversifying experiences, embracing opportunities, building meaningful relationships, and bringing people together to solve complex challenges.

Growing up just outside of Manhattan, New York, Keith's first passion was swimming. That passion led him to Towson University, where he competed as a Division I swimmer. Although he initially planned to pursue a degree in computer science, he quickly realized it wasn't the right fit. Encouraged by one of his professors, he explored courses in psychology, business, and marketing, ultimately discovering a field that blended creativity, strategy, and human connection. He graduated from Towson University with a Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing.

Keith built a strong foundation through a variety of marketing roles early in his career. He gained experience with organizations across numerous industries including Charm City Cakes and Monster Energy, where he oversaw the company's Eastern collegiate marketing program. He then joined the UK-based digital agency Jellyfish followed by the global advertising agency McCann Worldgroup, supporting the U.S. Army's Advertising & Marketing initiatives. Later in his career, Keith held positions including Social Media Manager at CAVA during the COVID-19 pandemic and served as Digital Marketing & Communications Specialist at Founders Financial before finding what he calls his professional home at Escalation Consultants, Inc.

Nearly six years ago, Keith accepted an invitation to join Escalation Consultants. Shortly after getting married, he and his wife relocated from Baltimore to South Western Colorado, where they now live near his colleague / brother-in-law and enjoy the opportunity to collaborate professionally while raising their young families.

Keith has climbed from Marketing Manager to Director of Marketing & Client Engagement and wears many hats on a daily basis. In a small, highly specialized team, no two days are alike. He may be developing marketing strategies, engaging prospective clients, conducting discovery calls, onboarding and training new subscribers, creating recap or projection presentations, or helping shape the advancements of EC's flagship platform, Rail Cost Control.

What he enjoys most is being on the front lines, building relationships with shippers, prospects, and clients while serving as a trusted resource and strategic partner.

One of Keith's proudest professional accomplishments has been helping strengthen Escalation Consultants' reputation while delivering meaningful results for clients. Through the company's strategic rail cost management program, Rail Cost Control, Keith and the rest of the EC team have helped shippers across numerous industries identify savings opportunities totaling hundreds of millions of dollars per year.

Working in the rail shipping industry presents unique challenges. Keith explains that helping companies navigate complex rail costs, uncover hidden savings opportunities, and rethink long-held assumptions requires equal parts expertise, persistence, and trust. He is equally passionate about helping shippers embrace emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, to remain competitive in an increasingly dynamic logistics landscape.

Keith's leadership philosophy is rooted in collaboration.

"The best ideas are born from collaboration," he says. "Everyone brings something unique to the table. I like to understand where we are, where we need to be, and then leverage each person's strengths to build the best solution."

Outside of work, Keith enjoys spending time with his wife, their two young daughters, a 4 year old and a 9 month old, their rescue dog, Ruby, and a flock of backyard chickens. Living just steps from both the mountains and the desert, the family spends as much time outdoors as possible, camping, exploring, and creating new adventures together.

Keith joined NITL's Emerging Leaders Program to continue developing his leadership skills while building relationships with peers across the logistics industry. The leadership team at Escalation Consultants has long admired NITL's role as the leading voice for shipper advocacy and the value it brings to the industry. Inspired by that perspective, Keith saw the Emerging Leaders Program as an opportunity to expand his knowledge beyond rail, learn from professionals representing all modes of transportation, and contribute his own expertise while growing alongside the next generation of industry leaders.

As the logistics industry continues to evolve, Keith is helping shape its future through curiosity, collaboration, and an unwavering commitment to serving customers. His ability to translate complex rail shipping challenges into practical business solutions, embrace emerging technologies, and build lasting relationships has earned the trust of clients and colleagues alike. Just as importantly, he is committed to continuous learning and to sharing knowledge that helps others succeed.

Whether mentoring teammates, collaborating with industry partners, or helping shippers navigate an increasingly complex transportation landscape, Keith leads with authenticity, humility, and a genuine desire to create value for others. His willingness to embrace change, champion innovation, and invest in the success of those around him reflects the qualities of a leader who is not only making an impact today but is also well positioned to help guide the future of the transportation and logistics industry. As one of NITL's Emerging Leaders, Keith represents the next generation of thoughtful, collaborative leadership that will help move the industry forward for years to come.

Keith Nestman is a current member of the National Industrial Transportation League's 2026 Emerging Leaders Program.