

Form 5500

Department of the Treasury  
Internal Revenue Service

Department of Labor  
Employee Benefits Security  
Administration

Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation

Annual Return/Report of Employee Benefit Plan

This form is required to be filed for employee benefit plans under sections 104 and 4065 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and sections 6057(b) and 6058(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code).

▶ Complete all entries in accordance with the instructions to the Form 5500.

OMB Nos. 1210-0110  
1210-0089

2024

This Form is Open to Public Inspection

Part I Annual Report Identification Information

For calendar plan year 2024 or fiscal plan year beginning 01/01/2024 and ending 12/31/2024

- A This return/report is for: [ ] a multiemployer plan [ ] a multiple-employer plan (Filers checking this box must provide participating employer information in accordance with the form instructions.) [x] a single-employer plan [ ] a DFE (specify) \_\_\_\_
B This return/report is: [ ] the first return/report [ ] the final return/report [ ] an amended return/report [ ] a short plan year return/report (less than 12 months)
C If the plan is a collectively-bargained plan, check here. [ ]
D Check box if filing under: [x] Form 5558 [ ] automatic extension [ ] the DFVC program [ ] special extension (enter description)
E If this is a retroactively adopted plan permitted by SECURE Act section 201, check here. [ ]

Part II Basic Plan Information—enter all requested information

1a Name of plan: ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES 401(K) PLAN
1b Three-digit plan number (PN): 001
1c Effective date of plan: 01/01/2020
2a Plan sponsor's name (employer, if for a single-employer plan): ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES, LLC
2b Employer Identification Number (EIN): 84-3811689
2c Plan Sponsor's telephone number: 248-605-1826
2d Business code (see instructions): 541519

Caution: A penalty for the late or incomplete filing of this return/report will be assessed unless reasonable cause is established.

Under penalties of perjury and other penalties set forth in the instructions, I declare that I have examined this return/report, including accompanying schedules, statements and attachments, as well as the electronic version of this return/report, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, it is true, correct, and complete.

Table with 4 columns: SIGN HERE, Signature of plan administrator, Date, Enter name of individual signing as plan administrator. Includes rows for employer/plan sponsor and DFE.

For Paperwork Reduction Act Notice, see the Instructions for Form 5500.

Form 5500 (2024) v. 240311

<b>3a</b> Plan administrator's name and address <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as Plan Sponsor	<b>3b</b> Administrator's EIN	
	<b>3c</b> Administrator's telephone number	
<b>4</b> If the name and/or EIN of the plan sponsor or the plan name has changed since the last return/report filed for this plan, enter the plan sponsor's name, EIN, the plan name and the plan number from the last return/report: <b>a</b> Sponsor's name <b>c</b> Plan Name	<b>4b</b> EIN	
	<b>4d</b> PN	
<b>5</b> Total number of participants at the beginning of the plan year	<b>5</b>	339
<b>6</b> Number of participants as of the end of the plan year unless otherwise stated (welfare plans complete only lines <b>6a(1)</b> , <b>6a(2)</b> , <b>6b</b> , <b>6c</b> , and <b>6d</b> ). <b>a(1)</b> Total number of active participants at the beginning of the plan year ..... <b>a(2)</b> Total number of active participants at the end of the plan year ..... <b>b</b> Retired or separated participants receiving benefits..... <b>c</b> Other retired or separated participants entitled to future benefits ..... <b>d</b> Subtotal. Add lines <b>6a(2)</b> , <b>6b</b> , and <b>6c</b> ..... <b>e</b> Deceased participants whose beneficiaries are receiving or are entitled to receive benefits. .... <b>f</b> Total. Add lines <b>6d</b> and <b>6e</b> ..... <b>g(1)</b> Number of participants with account balances as of the beginning of the plan year (only defined contribution plans complete this item) ..... <b>g(2)</b> Number of participants with account balances as of the end of the plan year (only defined contribution plans complete this item) ..... <b>h</b> Number of participants who terminated employment during the plan year with accrued benefits that were less than 100% vested.....	<b>6a(1)</b>	258
	<b>6a(2)</b>	201
	<b>6b</b>	0
	<b>6c</b>	80
	<b>6d</b>	281
	<b>6e</b>	0
	<b>6f</b>	281
	<b>6g(1)</b>	227
<b>6g(2)</b>	198	
<b>6h</b>	0	
<b>7</b> Enter the total number of employers obligated to contribute to the plan (only multiemployer plans complete this item) .....	<b>7</b>	

**8a** If the plan provides pension benefits, enter the applicable pension feature codes from the List of Plan Characteristics Codes in the instructions:  
 2A 2E 2F 2G 2J 2K 2T 3D

**b** If the plan provides welfare benefits, enter the applicable welfare feature codes from the List of Plan Characteristics Codes in the instructions:

<b>9a</b> Plan funding arrangement (check all that apply)	<b>9b</b> Plan benefit arrangement (check all that apply)
(1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Insurance	(1) <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance
(2) <input type="checkbox"/> Code section 412(e)(3) insurance contracts	(2) <input type="checkbox"/> Code section 412(e)(3) insurance contracts
(3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trust	(3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trust
(4) <input type="checkbox"/> General assets of the sponsor	(4) <input type="checkbox"/> General assets of the sponsor

**10** Check all applicable boxes in 10a and 10b to indicate which schedules are attached, and, where indicated, enter the number attached. (See instructions)

**a Pension Schedules**

- (1)  **R** (Retirement Plan Information)
- (2)  **MB** (Multiemployer Defined Benefit Plan and Certain Money Purchase Plan Actuarial Information) - signed by the plan actuary
- (3)  **SB** (Single-Employer Defined Benefit Plan Actuarial Information) - signed by the plan actuary
- (4)  **DCG** (Individual Plan Information) – Number Attached \_\_\_\_\_
- (5)  **MEP** (Multiple-Employer Retirement Plan Information)

**b General Schedules**

- (1)  **H** (Financial Information)
- (2)  **I** (Financial Information – Small Plan)
- (3)  **A** (Insurance Information) – Number Attached   1
- (4)  **C** (Service Provider Information)
- (5)  **D** (DFE/Participating Plan Information)
- (6)  **G** (Financial Transaction Schedules)

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**Part III Form M-1 Compliance Information (to be completed by welfare benefit plans)**

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**11a** If the plan provides welfare benefits, was the plan subject to the Form M-1 filing requirements during the plan year? (See instructions and 29 CFR 2520.101-2.) .....  Yes  No

If "Yes" is checked, complete lines 11b and 11c.

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**11b** Is the plan currently in compliance with the Form M-1 filing requirements? (See instructions and 29 CFR 2520.101-2.) .....  Yes  No

**11c** Enter the Receipt Confirmation Code for the 2024 Form M-1 annual report. If the plan was not required to file the 2024 Form M-1 annual report, enter the Receipt Confirmation Code for the most recent Form M-1 that was required to be filed under the Form M-1 filing requirements. (Failure to enter a valid Receipt Confirmation Code will subject the Form 5500 filing to rejection as incomplete.)

Receipt Confirmation Code \_\_\_\_\_

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<p><b>SCHEDULE A</b> <b>(Form 5500)</b></p> <p>Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service</p> <hr/> <p>Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration</p> <hr/> <p>Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation</p>	<p><b>Insurance Information</b></p> <p>This schedule is required to be filed under section 104 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).</p> <p>▶ <b>File as an attachment to Form 5500.</b></p> <p>▶ Insurance companies are required to provide the information pursuant to ERISA section 103(a)(2).</p>	<p>OMB No. 1210-0110</p> <hr/> <p><b>2024</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>This Form is Open to Public Inspection</b></p>
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For calendar plan year 2024 or fiscal plan year beginning **01/01/2024** and ending **12/31/2024**

<p><b>A</b> Name of plan <b>ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES 401(K) PLAN</b></p>	<p><b>B</b> Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶</p>	<p><b>001</b></p>
<p><b>C</b> Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 <b>ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES, LLC</b></p>	<p><b>D</b> Employer Identification Number (EIN) <b>84-3811689</b></p>	

**Part I Information Concerning Insurance Contract Coverage, Fees, and Commissions** Provide information for each contract on a separate Schedule A. Individual contracts grouped as a unit in Parts II and III can be reported on a single Schedule A.

**1 Coverage Information:**

(a) Name of insurance carrier  
**MASSMUTUAL LIFE INSURANCE CO.**

(b) EIN	(c) NAIC code	(d) Contract or identification number	(e) Approximate number of persons covered at end of policy or contract year	Policy or contract year	
				(f) From	(g) To
04-1590850	65935	761663-01	198	01/01/2024	12/31/2024

**2 Insurance fee and commission information.** Enter the total fees and total commissions paid. List in line 3 the agents, brokers, and other persons in descending order of the amount paid.

<p>(a) Total amount of commissions paid <b>27392</b></p>	<p>(b) Total amount of fees paid <b>0</b></p>
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**3 Persons receiving commissions and fees.** (Complete as many entries as needed to report all persons).

(a) Name and address of the agent, broker, or other person to whom commissions or fees were paid  
**HANTZ AGENCY, LLC** **26200 AMERICAN DR. 5TH FLOOR**  
**SOUTHFIELD, MI 48034**

(b) Amount of sales and base commissions paid	Fees and other commissions paid		(e) Organization code
	(c) Amount	(d) Purpose	
27392			3

(a) Name and address of the agent, broker, or other person to whom commissions or fees were paid

(b) Amount of sales and base commissions paid	Fees and other commissions paid		(e) Organization code
	(c) Amount	(d) Purpose	

(a) Name and address of the agent, broker, or other person to whom commissions or fees were paid

(b) Amount of sales and base commissions paid	Fees and other commissions paid		(e) Organization code
	(c) Amount	(d) Purpose	

(a) Name and address of the agent, broker, or other person to whom commissions or fees were paid

(b) Amount of sales and base commissions paid	Fees and other commissions paid		(e) Organization code
	(c) Amount	(d) Purpose	

(a) Name and address of the agent, broker, or other person to whom commissions or fees were paid

(b) Amount of sales and base commissions paid	Fees and other commissions paid		(e) Organization code
	(c) Amount	(d) Purpose	

(a) Name and address of the agent, broker, or other person to whom commissions or fees were paid

(b) Amount of sales and base commissions paid	Fees and other commissions paid		(e) Organization code
	(c) Amount	(d) Purpose	

(a) Name and address of the agent, broker, or other person to whom commissions or fees were paid

(b) Amount of sales and base commissions paid	Fees and other commissions paid		(e) Organization code
	(c) Amount	(d) Purpose	

<b>Part II</b>	<b>Investment and Annuity Contract Information</b>	
	Where individual contracts are provided, the entire group of such individual contracts with each carrier may be treated as a unit for purposes of this report.	
<b>4</b>	Current value of plan's interest under this contract in the general account at year end .....	28839
<b>5</b>	Current value of plan's interest under this contract in separate accounts at year end.....	9199645
<b>6</b>	<b>Contracts With Allocated Funds:</b>	
<b>a</b>	State the basis of premium rates ▶	
<b>b</b>	Premiums paid to carrier .....	<b>6b</b>
<b>c</b>	Premiums due but unpaid at the end of the year .....	<b>6c</b>
<b>d</b>	If the carrier, service, or other organization incurred any specific costs in connection with the acquisition or retention of the contract or policy, enter amount. .... Specify nature of costs ▶	<b>6d</b>
<b>e</b>	Type of contract: (1) <input type="checkbox"/> individual policies                      (2) <input type="checkbox"/> group deferred annuity (3) <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) ▶	
<b>f</b>	If contract purchased, in whole or in part, to distribute benefits from a terminating plan, check here ▶ <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>7</b>	<b>Contracts With Unallocated Funds (Do not include portions of these contracts maintained in separate accounts)</b>	
<b>a</b>	Type of contract: (1) <input type="checkbox"/> deposit administration                      (2) <input type="checkbox"/> immediate participation guarantee (3) <input type="checkbox"/> guaranteed investment                      (4) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other ▶ <b>GROUP ANNUITY CONTRACT</b>	
<b>b</b>	Balance at the end of the previous year .....	<b>7b</b> 173445
<b>c</b>	Additions: (1) Contributions deposited during the year .....	<b>7c(1)</b> 16892
	(2) Dividends and credits.....	<b>7c(2)</b> 0
	(3) Interest credited during the year.....	<b>7c(3)</b> 2182
	(4) Transferred from separate account .....	<b>7c(4)</b> 96864
	(5) Other (specify below)..... ▶ <b>LOAN REPAYMENT</b>	<b>7c(5)</b> 2545
	(6) Total additions .....	<b>7c(6)</b> 118483
<b>d</b>	Total of balance and additions (add lines <b>7b</b> and <b>7c(6)</b> ) .....	<b>7d</b> 291928
<b>e</b>	Deductions:	
	(1) Disbursed from fund to pay benefits or purchase annuities during year .....	<b>7e(1)</b> 147549
	(2) Administration charge made by carrier.....	<b>7e(2)</b> 132
	(3) Transferred to separate account .....	<b>7e(3)</b> 115408
	(4) Other (specify below)..... ▶	<b>7e(4)</b> 0
(5) Total deductions .....	<b>7e(5)</b> 263089	
<b>f</b>	Balance at the end of the current year (subtract line <b>7e(5)</b> from line <b>7d</b> ).....	<b>7f</b> 28839

**Part III Welfare Benefit Contract Information**  
 If more than one contract covers the same group of employees of the same employer(s) or members of the same employee organizations(s), the information may be combined for reporting purposes if such contracts are experience-rated as a unit. Where contracts cover individual employees, the entire group of such individual contracts with each carrier may be treated as a unit for purposes of this report.

**8** Benefit and contract type (check all applicable boxes)

- a**  Health (other than dental or vision)
- b**  Dental
- c**  Vision
- d**  Life insurance
- e**  Temporary disability (accident and sickness)
- f**  Long-term disability
- g**  Supplemental unemployment
- h**  Prescription drug
- i**  Stop loss (large deductible)
- j**  HMO contract
- k**  PPO contract
- l**  Indemnity contract
- m**  Other (specify) ▶

**9** Experience-rated contracts:

<b>a</b>	Premiums: (1) Amount received .....	<b>9a(1)</b>		
	(2) Increase (decrease) in amount due but unpaid .....	<b>9a(2)</b>		
	(3) Increase (decrease) in unearned premium reserve .....	<b>9a(3)</b>		
	(4) Earned ((1) + (2) - (3)) .....		<b>9a(4)</b>	0
<b>b</b>	Benefit charges (1) Claims paid .....	<b>9b(1)</b>		
	(2) Increase (decrease) in claim reserves .....	<b>9b(2)</b>		
	(3) Incurred claims (add (1) and (2)) .....		<b>9b(3)</b>	0
	(4) Claims charged .....		<b>9b(4)</b>	
<b>c</b>	Remainder of premium: (1) Retention charges (on an accrual basis) --			
	(A) Commissions .....	<b>9c(1)(A)</b>		
	(B) Administrative service or other fees .....	<b>9c(1)(B)</b>		
	(C) Other specific acquisition costs .....	<b>9c(1)(C)</b>		
	(D) Other expenses .....	<b>9c(1)(D)</b>		
	(E) Taxes .....	<b>9c(1)(E)</b>		
	(F) Charges for risks or other contingencies .....	<b>9c(1)(F)</b>		
	(G) Other retention charges .....	<b>9c(1)(G)</b>		
	(H) Total retention .....		<b>9c(1)(H)</b>	0
	(2) Dividends or retroactive rate refunds. (These amounts were <input type="checkbox"/> paid in cash, or <input type="checkbox"/> credited.) .....		<b>9c(2)</b>	
<b>d</b>	Status of policyholder reserves at end of year: (1) Amount held to provide benefits after retirement .....		<b>9d(1)</b>	
	(2) Claim reserves .....		<b>9d(2)</b>	
	(3) Other reserves .....		<b>9d(3)</b>	
<b>e</b>	Dividends or retroactive rate refunds due. (Do not include amount entered in line 9c(2).) .....		<b>9e</b>	

**10** Nonexperience-rated contracts:

<b>a</b>	Total premiums or subscription charges paid to carrier .....	<b>10a</b>	
<b>b</b>	If the carrier, service, or other organization incurred any specific costs in connection with the acquisition or retention of the contract or policy, other than reported in Part I, line 2 above, report amount. ....	<b>10b</b>	

Specify nature of costs.

**Part IV Provision of Information**

**11** Did the insurance company fail to provide any information necessary to complete Schedule A? .....  Yes  No

**12** If the answer to line 11 is "Yes," specify the information not provided. ▶

<b>SCHEDULE C</b> <b>(Form 5500)</b>  <small>Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service</small>  <small>Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration</small>  <small>Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation</small>	<b>Service Provider Information</b>  This schedule is required to be filed under section 104 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).  <b>▶ File as an attachment to Form 5500.</b>	<small>OMB No. 1210-0110</small>  <b>2024</b>  <b>This Form is Open to Public Inspection.</b>
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For calendar plan year 2024 or fiscal plan year beginning **01/01/2024** and ending **12/31/2024**

<b>A</b> Name of plan ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES 401(K) PLAN	<b>B</b> Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶	001
<b>C</b> Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES, LLC	<b>D</b> Employer Identification Number (EIN) 84-3811689	

**Part I Service Provider Information (see instructions)**

You must complete this Part, in accordance with the instructions, to report the information required for **each person** who received, directly or indirectly, \$5,000 or more in total compensation (i.e., money or anything else of monetary value) in connection with services rendered to the plan or the person's position with the plan during the plan year. If a person received **only** eligible indirect compensation for which the plan received the required disclosures, you are required to answer line 1 but are not required to include that person when completing the remainder of this Part.

**1 Information on Persons Receiving Only Eligible Indirect Compensation**

**a** Check "Yes" or "No" to indicate whether you are excluding a person from the remainder of this Part because they received only eligible indirect compensation for which the plan received the required disclosures (see instructions for definitions and conditions).....  Yes  No

**b** If you answered line 1a "Yes," enter the name and EIN or address of each person providing the required disclosures for the service providers who received only eligible indirect compensation. Complete as many entries as needed (see instructions).

**(b)** Enter name and EIN or address of person who provided you disclosures on eligible indirect compensation

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**(b)** Enter name and EIN or address of person who provided you disclosures on eligible indirect compensation

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**2. Information on Other Service Providers Receiving Direct or Indirect Compensation.** Except for those persons for whom you answered "Yes" to line 1a above, complete as many entries as needed to list each person receiving, directly or indirectly, \$5,000 or more in total compensation (i.e., money or anything else of value) in connection with services rendered to the plan or their position with the plan during the plan year. (See instructions).

(a) Enter name and EIN or address (see instructions)

THE BENEFIT ADVANTAGE, INC.

38-3254950

(b) Service Code(s)	(c) Relationship to employer, employee organization, or person known to be a party-in-interest	(d) Enter direct compensation paid by the plan. If none, enter -0-.	(e) Did service provider receive indirect compensation? (sources other than plan or plan sponsor)	(f) Did indirect compensation include eligible indirect compensation, for which the plan received the required disclosures?	(g) Enter total indirect compensation received by service provider excluding eligible indirect compensation for which you answered "Yes" to element (f). If none, enter -0-.	(h) Did the service provider give you a formula instead of an amount or estimated amount?
13 37 12 50	THIRD-PARTY ADMINISTRATO	5600	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4563	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

(a) Enter name and EIN or address (see instructions)

EMPOWER ANNUITY INS CO OF AMERICA

8515 E ORCHARD RD  
GREENWOOD VILLAGE, CO 80111

(b) Service Code(s)	(c) Relationship to employer, employee organization, or person known to be a party-in-interest	(d) Enter direct compensation paid by the plan. If none, enter -0-.	(e) Did service provider receive indirect compensation? (sources other than plan or plan sponsor)	(f) Did indirect compensation include eligible indirect compensation, for which the plan received the required disclosures?	(g) Enter total indirect compensation received by service provider excluding eligible indirect compensation for which you answered "Yes" to element (f). If none, enter -0-.	(h) Did the service provider give you a formula instead of an amount or estimated amount?
64	RECORDKEEPER	3955	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	0	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

(a) Enter name and EIN or address (see instructions)

EMPOWER ADVISORY GROUP, LLC

8515 EAST ORHARD ROAD  
GREENWOOD VILLAGE, CO 80111

(b) Service Code(s)	(c) Relationship to employer, employee organization, or person known to be a party-in-interest	(d) Enter direct compensation paid by the plan. If none, enter -0-.	(e) Did service provider receive indirect compensation? (sources other than plan or plan sponsor)	(f) Did indirect compensation include eligible indirect compensation, for which the plan received the required disclosures?	(g) Enter total indirect compensation received by service provider excluding eligible indirect compensation for which you answered "Yes" to element (f). If none, enter -0-.	(h) Did the service provider give you a formula instead of an amount or estimated amount?
28	INVESTMENT MGMT	2201	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

**Part I Service Provider Information (continued)**

3. If you reported on line 2 receipt of indirect compensation, other than eligible indirect compensation, by a service provider, and the service provider is a fiduciary or provides contract administrator, consulting, custodial, investment advisory, investment management, broker, or recordkeeping services, answer the following questions for (a) each source from whom the service provider received \$1,000 or more in indirect compensation and (b) each source for whom the service provider gave you a formula used to determine the indirect compensation instead of an amount or estimated amount of the indirect compensation. Complete as many entries as needed to report the required information for each source.

(a) Enter service provider name as it appears on line 2	(b) Service Codes (see instructions)	(c) Enter amount of indirect compensation
THE BENEFIT ADVANTAGE, INC.	13	4563

(d) Enter name and EIN (address) of source of indirect compensation	(e) Describe the indirect compensation, including any formula used to determine the service provider's eligibility for or the amount of the indirect compensation.	
EMPOWER ANNUITY INSURANCE COMPANY 8515 E. ORCHARD RD. GREENWOOD VILLAGE, CO 80111	TPA ALLOWANCE PAYMENT	

(a) Enter service provider name as it appears on line 2	(b) Service Codes (see instructions)	(c) Enter amount of indirect compensation

(d) Enter name and EIN (address) of source of indirect compensation	(e) Describe the indirect compensation, including any formula used to determine the service provider's eligibility for or the amount of the indirect compensation.	

(a) Enter service provider name as it appears on line 2	(b) Service Codes (see instructions)	(c) Enter amount of indirect compensation

(d) Enter name and EIN (address) of source of indirect compensation	(e) Describe the indirect compensation, including any formula used to determine the service provider's eligibility for or the amount of the indirect compensation.	

**Part II Service Providers Who Fail or Refuse to Provide Information**

**4** Provide, to the extent possible, the following information for each service provider who failed or refused to provide the information necessary to complete this Schedule.

<b>(a)</b> Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	<b>(b)</b> Nature of Service Code(s)	<b>(c)</b> Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide

<b>(a)</b> Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	<b>(b)</b> Nature of Service Code(s)	<b>(c)</b> Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide

<b>(a)</b> Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	<b>(b)</b> Nature of Service Code(s)	<b>(c)</b> Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide

<b>(a)</b> Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	<b>(b)</b> Nature of Service Code(s)	<b>(c)</b> Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide

<b>(a)</b> Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	<b>(b)</b> Nature of Service Code(s)	<b>(c)</b> Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide

<b>(a)</b> Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	<b>(b)</b> Nature of Service Code(s)	<b>(c)</b> Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide

**Part III Termination Information on Accountants and Enrolled Actuaries (see instructions)**  
(complete as many entries as needed)

<b>a</b> Name:	<b>b</b> EIN:
<b>c</b> Position:	
<b>d</b> Address:	<b>e</b> Telephone:

Explanation:

<b>a</b> Name:	<b>b</b> EIN:
<b>c</b> Position:	
<b>d</b> Address:	<b>e</b> Telephone:

Explanation:

<b>a</b> Name:	<b>b</b> EIN:
<b>c</b> Position:	
<b>d</b> Address:	<b>e</b> Telephone:

Explanation:

<b>a</b> Name:	<b>b</b> EIN:
<b>c</b> Position:	
<b>d</b> Address:	<b>e</b> Telephone:

Explanation:

<b>a</b> Name:	<b>b</b> EIN:
<b>c</b> Position:	
<b>d</b> Address:	<b>e</b> Telephone:

Explanation:

<b>SCHEDULE D</b> <b>(Form 5500)</b>  <small>Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service</small>  <small>Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration</small>	<b>DFE/Participating Plan Information</b>  This schedule is required to be filed under section 104 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).  <b>▶ File as an attachment to Form 5500.</b>	<small>OMB No. 1210-0110</small>  <b>2024</b>  <b>This Form is Open to Public Inspection.</b>
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For calendar plan year 2024 or fiscal plan year beginning 01/01/2024 and ending 12/31/2024

<b>A</b> Name of plan <u>ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES 401(K) PLAN</u>	<b>B</b> Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶	<u>001</u>
<b>C</b> Plan or DFE sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 <u>ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES, LLC</u>	<b>D</b> Employer Identification Number (EIN) <u>84-3811689</u>	

<b>Part I</b>	<b>Information on interests in MTIAs, CCTs, PSAs, and 103-12 IEs (to be completed by plans and DFEs)</b> (Complete as many entries as needed to report all interests in DFEs)
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<b>a</b> Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: <u>SEPARATE ACCOUNT SCAI</u>		
<b>b</b> Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): <u>MASSMUTUAL LIFE INSURANCE CO.</u>		
<b>c</b> EIN-PN <u>04-1590850-000</u>	<b>d</b> Entity code <u>P</u>	<b>e</b> Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) <u>9199645</u>
<b>a</b> Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE:		
<b>b</b> Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a):		
<b>c</b> EIN-PN	<b>d</b> Entity code	<b>e</b> Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions)
<b>a</b> Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE:		
<b>b</b> Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a):		
<b>c</b> EIN-PN	<b>d</b> Entity code	<b>e</b> Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions)
<b>a</b> Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE:		
<b>b</b> Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a):		
<b>c</b> EIN-PN	<b>d</b> Entity code	<b>e</b> Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions)
<b>a</b> Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE:		
<b>b</b> Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a):		
<b>c</b> EIN-PN	<b>d</b> Entity code	<b>e</b> Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions)
<b>a</b> Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE:		
<b>b</b> Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a):		
<b>c</b> EIN-PN	<b>d</b> Entity code	<b>e</b> Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions)
<b>a</b> Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE:		
<b>b</b> Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a):		
<b>c</b> EIN-PN	<b>d</b> Entity code	<b>e</b> Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions)





<b>SCHEDULE H</b> <b>(Form 5500)</b>  <small>Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service</small>  <small>Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration</small>  <small>Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation</small>	<b>Financial Information</b>  This schedule is required to be filed under section 104 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), and section 6058(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code).  <b>▶ File as an attachment to Form 5500.</b>	<small>OMB No. 1210-0110</small>  <b>2024</b>  <b>This Form is Open to Public Inspection</b>
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For calendar plan year 2024 or fiscal plan year beginning <b>01/01/2024</b> and ending <b>12/31/2024</b>	
<b>A</b> Name of plan <b>ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES 401(K) PLAN</b>	<b>B</b> Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶ <b>001</b>
<b>C</b> Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 <b>ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES, LLC</b>	<b>D</b> Employer Identification Number (EIN) <b>84-3811689</b>

<b>Part I</b>	<b>Asset and Liability Statement</b>
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**1** Current value of plan assets and liabilities at the beginning and end of the plan year. Combine the value of plan assets held in more than one trust. Report the value of the plan's interest in a commingled fund containing the assets of more than one plan on a line-by-line basis unless the value is reportable on lines 1c(9) through 1c(14). Do not enter the value of that portion of an insurance contract which guarantees, during this plan year, to pay a specific dollar benefit at a future date. **Round off amounts to the nearest dollar.** MTIAs, CCTs, PSAs, and 103-12 IEs do not complete lines 1b(1), 1b(2), 1c(8), 1g, 1h, and 1i. CCTs, PSAs, and 103-12 IEs also do not complete lines 1d and 1e. See instructions.

		(a) Beginning of Year	(b) End of Year
<b>Assets</b>			
<b>a</b> Total noninterest-bearing cash .....	<b>1a</b>		
<b>b</b> Receivables (less allowance for doubtful accounts):			
<b>(1)</b> Employer contributions .....	<b>1b(1)</b>	831	4552
<b>(2)</b> Participant contributions .....	<b>1b(2)</b>	0	0
<b>(3)</b> Other .....	<b>1b(3)</b>		
<b>c</b> General investments:			
<b>(1)</b> Interest-bearing cash (include money market accounts & certificates of deposit) .....	<b>1c(1)</b>		
<b>(2)</b> U.S. Government securities .....	<b>1c(2)</b>		
<b>(3)</b> Corporate debt instruments (other than employer securities):			
<b>(A)</b> Preferred .....	<b>1c(3)(A)</b>		
<b>(B)</b> All other .....	<b>1c(3)(B)</b>		
<b>(4)</b> Corporate stocks (other than employer securities):			
<b>(A)</b> Preferred .....	<b>1c(4)(A)</b>		
<b>(B)</b> Common .....	<b>1c(4)(B)</b>		
<b>(5)</b> Partnership/joint venture interests .....	<b>1c(5)</b>		
<b>(6)</b> Real estate (other than employer real property) .....	<b>1c(6)</b>		
<b>(7)</b> Loans (other than to participants) .....	<b>1c(7)</b>		
<b>(8)</b> Participant loans .....	<b>1c(8)</b>	62335	101089
<b>(9)</b> Value of interest in common/collective trusts .....	<b>1c(9)</b>		
<b>(10)</b> Value of interest in pooled separate accounts .....	<b>1c(10)</b>	0	0
<b>(11)</b> Value of interest in master trust investment accounts .....	<b>1c(11)</b>		
<b>(12)</b> Value of interest in 103-12 investment entities .....	<b>1c(12)</b>		
<b>(13)</b> Value of interest in registered investment companies (e.g., mutual funds) .....	<b>1c(13)</b>	8869466	9199645
<b>(14)</b> Value of funds held in insurance company general account (unallocated contracts).....	<b>1c(14)</b>	173445	28839
<b>(15)</b> Other.....	<b>1c(15)</b>		

<b>1d</b> Employer-related investments:		(a) Beginning of Year	(b) End of Year
(1) Employer securities.....	<b>1d(1)</b>		
(2) Employer real property.....	<b>1d(2)</b>		
<b>e</b> Buildings and other property used in plan operation.....	<b>1e</b>		
<b>f</b> Total assets (add all amounts in lines 1a through 1e).....	<b>1f</b>	9106077	9334125
<b>Liabilities</b>			
<b>g</b> Benefit claims payable.....	<b>1g</b>	0	25265
<b>h</b> Operating payables.....	<b>1h</b>		
<b>i</b> Acquisition indebtedness.....	<b>1i</b>		
<b>j</b> Other liabilities.....	<b>1j</b>		
<b>k</b> Total liabilities (add all amounts in lines 1g through 1j).....	<b>1k</b>	0	25265
<b>Net Assets</b>			
<b>l</b> Net assets (subtract line 1k from line 1f).....	<b>1l</b>	9106077	9308860

**Part II Income and Expense Statement**

**2** Plan income, expenses, and changes in net assets for the year. Include all income and expenses of the plan, including any trust(s) or separately maintained fund(s) and any payments/receipts to/from insurance carriers. Round off amounts to the nearest dollar. MTIAs, CCTs, PSAs, and 103-12 IEs do not complete lines 2a, 2b(1)(E), 2e, 2f, and 2g.

<b>Income</b>		(a) Amount	(b) Total
<b>a Contributions:</b>			
(1) Received or receivable in cash from: <b>(A)</b> Employers.....	<b>2a(1)(A)</b>	407606	
<b>(B)</b> Participants.....	<b>2a(1)(B)</b>	1217728	
<b>(C)</b> Others (including rollovers).....	<b>2a(1)(C)</b>	407545	
(2) Noncash contributions.....	<b>2a(2)</b>		
(3) Total contributions. Add lines <b>2a(1)(A)</b> , <b>(B)</b> , <b>(C)</b> , and line <b>2a(2)</b> .....	<b>2a(3)</b>		2032879
<b>b Earnings on investments:</b>			
<b>(1) Interest:</b>			
<b>(A)</b> Interest-bearing cash (including money market accounts and certificates of deposit).....	<b>2b(1)(A)</b>		
<b>(B)</b> U.S. Government securities.....	<b>2b(1)(B)</b>		
<b>(C)</b> Corporate debt instruments.....	<b>2b(1)(C)</b>		
<b>(D)</b> Loans (other than to participants).....	<b>2b(1)(D)</b>		
<b>(E)</b> Participant loans.....	<b>2b(1)(E)</b>	6965	
<b>(F)</b> Other.....	<b>2b(1)(F)</b>		
<b>(G)</b> Total interest. Add lines <b>2b(1)(A)</b> through <b>(F)</b> .....	<b>2b(1)(G)</b>		6965
<b>(2) Dividends:</b>			
<b>(A)</b> Preferred stock.....	<b>2b(2)(A)</b>		
<b>(B)</b> Common stock.....	<b>2b(2)(B)</b>		
<b>(C)</b> Registered investment company shares (e.g. mutual funds).....	<b>2b(2)(C)</b>	515292	
<b>(D)</b> Total dividends. Add lines <b>2b(2)(A)</b> , <b>(B)</b> , and <b>(C)</b> .....	<b>2b(2)(D)</b>		515292
<b>(3)</b> Rents.....	<b>2b(3)</b>		
<b>(4) Net gain (loss) on sale of assets:</b>			
<b>(A)</b> Aggregate proceeds.....	<b>2b(4)(A)</b>		
<b>(B)</b> Aggregate carrying amount (see instructions).....	<b>2b(4)(B)</b>		
<b>(C)</b> Subtract line <b>2b(4)(B)</b> from line <b>2b(4)(A)</b> and enter result.....	<b>2b(4)(C)</b>		
<b>(5) Unrealized appreciation (depreciation) of assets:</b>			
<b>(A)</b> Real estate.....	<b>2b(5)(A)</b>		
<b>(B)</b> Other.....	<b>2b(5)(B)</b>		
<b>(C)</b> Total unrealized appreciation of assets. Add lines <b>2b(5)(A)</b> and <b>(B)</b> .....	<b>2b(5)(C)</b>		

		(a) Amount	(b) Total
(6) Net investment gain (loss) from common/collective trusts .....	<b>2b(6)</b>		
(7) Net investment gain (loss) from pooled separate accounts .....	<b>2b(7)</b>		
(8) Net investment gain (loss) from master trust investment accounts .....	<b>2b(8)</b>		
(9) Net investment gain (loss) from 103-12 investment entities .....	<b>2b(9)</b>		
(10) Net investment gain (loss) from registered investment companies (e.g., mutual funds) .....	<b>2b(10)</b>		1099824
<b>c</b> Other income .....	<b>2c</b>		
<b>d</b> Total income. Add all <b>income</b> amounts in column (b) and enter total .....	<b>2d</b>		3654960

**Expenses**

<b>e</b> Benefit payment and payments to provide benefits:			
(1) Directly to participants or beneficiaries, including direct rollovers .....	<b>2e(1)</b>	3383022	
(2) To insurance carriers for the provision of benefits .....	<b>2e(2)</b>		
(3) Other .....	<b>2e(3)</b>		
(4) Total benefit payments. Add lines <b>2e(1)</b> through <b>(3)</b> .....	<b>2e(4)</b>		3383022
<b>f</b> Corrective distributions (see instructions) .....	<b>2f</b>		
<b>g</b> Certain deemed distributions of participant loans (see instructions) .....	<b>2g</b>		1424
<b>h</b> Interest expense .....	<b>2h</b>		
<b>i</b> Administrative expenses:			
(1) Salaries and allowances .....	<b>2i(1)</b>		
(2) Contract administrator fees .....	<b>2i(2)</b>		
(3) Recordkeeping fees .....	<b>2i(3)</b>	67731	
(4) IQPA audit fees .....	<b>2i(4)</b>		
(5) Investment advisory and investment management fees .....	<b>2i(5)</b>		
(6) Bank or trust company trustee/custodial fees .....	<b>2i(6)</b>		
(7) Actuarial fees .....	<b>2i(7)</b>		
(8) Legal fees .....	<b>2i(8)</b>		
(9) Valuation/appraisal fees .....	<b>2i(9)</b>		
(10) Other trustee fees and expenses .....	<b>2i(10)</b>		
(11) Other expenses .....	<b>2i(11)</b>		
(12) Total administrative expenses. Add lines <b>2i(1)</b> through <b>(11)</b> .....	<b>2i(12)</b>		67731
<b>j</b> Total expenses. Add all <b>expense</b> amounts in column (b) and enter total .....	<b>2j</b>		3452177

**Net Income and Reconciliation**

<b>k</b> Net income (loss). Subtract line <b>2j</b> from line <b>2d</b> .....	<b>2k</b>		202783
<b>l</b> Transfers of assets:			
(1) To this plan .....	<b>2l(1)</b>		
(2) From this plan .....	<b>2l(2)</b>		

**Part III Accountant's Opinion**

**3** Complete lines 3a through 3c if the opinion of an independent qualified public accountant is attached to this Form 5500. Complete line 3d if an opinion is not attached.

**a** The attached opinion of an independent qualified public accountant for this plan is (see instructions):

(1)  Unmodified (2)  Qualified (3)  Disclaimer (4)  Adverse

**b** Check the appropriate box(es) to indicate whether the IQPA performed an ERISA section 103(a)(3)(C) audit. Check both boxes (1) and (2) if the audit was performed pursuant to both 29 CFR 2520.103-8 and 29 CFR 2520.103-12(d). Check box (3) if pursuant to neither.

(1)  DOL Regulation 2520.103-8 (2)  DOL Regulation 2520.103-12(d) (3)  neither DOL Regulation 2520.103-8 nor DOL Regulation 2520.103-12(d).

**c** Enter the name and EIN of the accountant (or accounting firm) below:

(1) Name: **MOWERY & SCHOENFELD, LLC**

(2) EIN: **36-4111140**

**d** The opinion of an independent qualified public accountant is **not attached** as part of Schedule H because:

(1)  This form is filed for a CCT, PSA, DCG or MTIA. (2)  It will be attached to the next Form 5500 pursuant to 29 CFR 2520.104-50.

**Part IV Compliance Questions**

**4** CCTs and PSAs do not complete Part IV. MTIAs, 103-12 IEs, and GIAs do not complete lines 4a, 4e, 4f, 4g, 4h, 4k, 4m, 4n, or 5. 103-12 IEs also do not complete lines 4j and 4l. MTIAs also do not complete line 4l. DCGs do not complete lines 4e, 4f, 4k, 4l, and 5, and DCGs generally complete the rest of Part IV collectively for all plans in the DCG, except as otherwise provided (see instructions).

During the plan year:

	Yes	No	Amount
<b>a</b> Was there a failure to transmit to the plan any participant contributions within the time period described in 29 CFR 2510.3-102? Continue to answer "Yes" for any prior year failures until fully corrected. (See instructions and DOL's Voluntary Fiduciary Correction Program.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	65260
<b>b</b> Were any loans by the plan or fixed income obligations due the plan in default as of the close of the plan year or classified during the year as uncollectible? Disregard participant loans secured by participant's account balance. (Attach Schedule G (Form 5500) Part I if "Yes" is checked.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>c</b> Were any leases to which the plan was a party in default or classified during the year as uncollectible? (Attach Schedule G (Form 5500) Part II if "Yes" is checked.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>d</b> Were there any nonexempt transactions with any party-in-interest? (Do not include transactions reported on line 4a. Attach Schedule G (Form 5500) Part III if "Yes" is checked.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>e</b> Was this plan covered by a fidelity bond?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	500000
<b>f</b> Did the plan have a loss, whether or not reimbursed by the plan's fidelity bond, that was caused by fraud or dishonesty?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>g</b> Did the plan hold any assets whose current value was neither readily determinable on an established market nor set by an independent third party appraiser?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>h</b> Did the plan receive any noncash contributions whose value was neither readily determinable on an established market nor set by an independent third party appraiser?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>i</b> Did the plan have assets held for investment? (Attach schedule(s) of assets if "Yes" is checked, and see instructions for format requirements.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>j</b> Were any plan transactions or series of transactions in excess of 5% of the current value of plan assets? (Attach schedule of transactions if "Yes" is checked and see instructions for format requirements.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>k</b> Were all the plan assets either distributed to participants or beneficiaries, transferred to another plan, or brought under the control of the PBGC?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>l</b> Has the plan failed to provide any benefit when due under the plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>m</b> If this is an individual account plan, was there a blackout period? (See instructions and 29 CFR 2520.101-3.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>n</b> If 4m was answered "Yes," check the "Yes" box if you either provided the required notice or one of the exceptions to providing the notice applied under 29 CFR 2520.101-3.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**5a** Has a resolution to terminate the plan been adopted during the plan year or any prior plan year?  Yes  No  
If "Yes," enter the amount of any plan assets that reverted to the employer this year \_\_\_\_\_.

**5b** If, during this plan year, any assets or liabilities were transferred from this plan to another plan(s), identify the plan(s) to which assets or liabilities were transferred. (See instructions.)

<b>5b(1)</b> Name of plan(s)	<b>5b(2)</b> EIN(s)	<b>5b(3)</b> PN(s)

**5c** Was the plan a defined benefit plan covered under the PBGC insurance program at any time during this plan year? (See ERISA section 4021 and instructions.) .....  Yes  No  Not determined

If "Yes" is checked, enter the My PAA confirmation number from the PBGC premium filing for this plan year \_\_\_\_\_.

<b>SCHEDULE R</b> <b>(Form 5500)</b>  <small>Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service</small>  <small>Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration</small>  <small>Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation</small>	<b>Retirement Plan Information</b>  This schedule is required to be filed under sections 104 and 4065 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and section 6058(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code).  <b>▶ File as an attachment to Form 5500.</b>	<small>OMB No. 1210-0110</small>  <b>2024</b>  <b>This Form is Open to Public Inspection.</b>
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For calendar plan year 2024 or fiscal plan year beginning **01/01/2024** and ending **12/31/2024**

<b>A</b> Name of plan <b>ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES 401(K) PLAN</b>	<b>B</b> Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶	<b>001</b>
<b>C</b> Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 <b>ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES, LLC</b>	<b>D</b> Employer Identification Number (EIN) <b>84-3811689</b>	

<b>Part I</b>	<b>Distributions</b>
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**All references to distributions relate only to payments of benefits during the plan year.**

**1** Total value of distributions paid in property other than in cash or the forms of property specified in the instructions..... 

<b>1</b>		<b>0</b>
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**2** Enter the EIN(s) of payor(s) who paid benefits on behalf of the plan to participants or beneficiaries during the year (if more than two, enter EINs of the two payors who paid the greatest dollar amounts of benefits):  
EIN(s): 04-1590850

**Profit-sharing plans, ESOPs, and stock bonus plans, skip line 3.**

**3** Number of participants (living or deceased) whose benefits were distributed in a single sum, during the plan year..... 

<b>3</b>	
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<b>Part II</b>	<b>Funding Information</b> (If the plan is not subject to the minimum funding requirements of section 412 of the Internal Revenue Code or ERISA section 302, skip this Part.)
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**4** Is the plan administrator making an election under Code section 412(d)(2) or ERISA section 302(d)(2)? .....  Yes  No  N/A  
**If the plan is a defined benefit plan, go to line 8.**

**5** If a waiver of the minimum funding standard for a prior year is being amortized in this plan year, see instructions and enter the date of the ruling letter granting the waiver. **Date:** Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_  
**If you completed line 5, complete lines 3, 9, and 10 of Schedule MB and do not complete the remainder of this schedule.**

<b>6 a</b> Enter the minimum required contribution for this plan year (include any prior year accumulated funding deficiency not waived) .....	<b>6a</b>	
<b>b</b> Enter the amount contributed by the employer to the plan for this plan year .....	<b>6b</b>	
<b>c</b> Subtract the amount in line 6b from the amount in line 6a. Enter the result (enter a minus sign to the left of a negative amount).....	<b>6c</b>	

**If you completed line 6c, skip lines 8 and 9.**

**7** Will the minimum funding amount reported on line 6c be met by the funding deadline?.....  Yes  No  N/A

**8** If a change in actuarial cost method was made for this plan year pursuant to a revenue procedure or other authority providing automatic approval for the change or a class ruling letter, does the plan sponsor or plan administrator agree with the change? .....  Yes  No  N/A

<b>Part III</b>	<b>Amendments</b>
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**9** If this is a defined benefit pension plan, were any amendments adopted during this plan year that increased or decreased the value of benefits? If yes, check the appropriate box. If no, check the "No" box.....  Increase  Decrease  Both  No

<b>Part IV</b>	<b>ESOPs</b> (see instructions). If this is not a plan described under section 409(a) or 4975(e)(7) of the Internal Revenue Code, skip this Part.
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**10** Were unallocated employer securities or proceeds from the sale of unallocated securities used to repay any exempt loan? .....  Yes  No

**11 a** Does the ESOP hold any preferred stock? .....  Yes  No

**b** If the ESOP has an outstanding exempt loan with the employer as lender, is such loan part of a "back-to-back" loan? (See instructions for definition of "back-to-back" loan.) .....  Yes  No

**12** Does the ESOP hold any stock that is not readily tradable on an established securities market? .....  Yes  No

**Part V Additional Information for Multiemployer Defined Benefit Pension Plans**

**13** Enter the following information for each employer that (1) contributed more than 5% of total contributions to the plan during the plan year or (2) was one of the top-ten highest contributors (measured in dollars). See instructions. Complete as many entries as needed to report all applicable employers.

**a** Name of contributing employer \_\_\_\_\_

**b** EIN \_\_\_\_\_ **c** Dollar amount contributed by employer \_\_\_\_\_

**d** Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box  and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

**e** Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box  and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) Base unit measure:  Hourly  Weekly  Unit of production  Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**a** Name of contributing employer \_\_\_\_\_

**b** EIN \_\_\_\_\_ **c** Dollar amount contributed by employer \_\_\_\_\_

**d** Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box  and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

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**e** Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box  and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) Base unit measure:  Hourly  Weekly  Unit of production  Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**a** Name of contributing employer \_\_\_\_\_

**b** EIN \_\_\_\_\_ **c** Dollar amount contributed by employer \_\_\_\_\_

**d** Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box  and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

**e** Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box  and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) Base unit measure:  Hourly  Weekly  Unit of production  Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**a** Name of contributing employer \_\_\_\_\_

**b** EIN \_\_\_\_\_ **c** Dollar amount contributed by employer \_\_\_\_\_

**d** Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box  and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

**e** Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box  and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) Base unit measure:  Hourly  Weekly  Unit of production  Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**a** Name of contributing employer \_\_\_\_\_

**b** EIN \_\_\_\_\_ **c** Dollar amount contributed by employer \_\_\_\_\_

**d** Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box  and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

**e** Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box  and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) Base unit measure:  Hourly  Weekly  Unit of production  Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**14** Enter the number of deferred vested and retired participants (inactive participants), as of the beginning of the plan year, whose contributing employer is no longer making contributions to the plan for:

<b>a</b> The current plan year. Check the box to indicate the counting method used to determine the number of inactive participants: <input type="checkbox"/> last contributing employer <input type="checkbox"/> alternative <input type="checkbox"/> reasonable approximation (see instructions for required attachment).....	<b>14a</b>	
<b>b</b> The plan year immediately preceding the current plan year. <input type="checkbox"/> Check the box if the number reported is a change from what was previously reported (see instructions for required attachment).....	<b>14b</b>	
<b>c</b> The second preceding plan year. <input type="checkbox"/> Check the box if the number reported is a change from what was previously reported (see instructions for required attachment).....	<b>14c</b>	

**15** Enter the ratio of the number of participants under the plan on whose behalf no employer had an obligation to make an employer contribution during the current plan year to:

<b>a</b> The corresponding number for the plan year immediately preceding the current plan year .....	<b>15a</b>	
<b>b</b> The corresponding number for the second preceding plan year .....	<b>15b</b>	

**16** Information with respect to any employers who withdrew from the plan during the preceding plan year:

<b>a</b> Enter the number of employers who withdrew during the preceding plan year .....	<b>16a</b>	
<b>b</b> If line 16a is greater than 0, enter the aggregate amount of withdrawal liability assessed or estimated to be assessed against such withdrawn employers.....	<b>16b</b>	

**17** If assets and liabilities from another plan have been transferred to or merged with this plan during the plan year, check box and see instructions regarding supplemental information to be included as an attachment .....

**Part VI Additional Information for Single-Employer and Multiemployer Defined Benefit Pension Plans**

**18** If any liabilities to participants or their beneficiaries under the plan as of the end of the plan year consist (in whole or in part) of liabilities to such participants and beneficiaries under two or more pension plans as of immediately before such plan year, check box and see instructions regarding supplemental information to be included as an attachment .....

**19** If the total number of participants is 1,000 or more, complete lines (a) and (b):

**a** Enter the percentage of plan assets held as:  
 Public Equity: \_\_\_\_\_% Private Equity: \_\_\_\_\_% Investment-Grade Debt and Interest Rate Hedging Assets: \_\_\_\_\_%  
 High-Yield Debt: \_\_\_\_\_% Real Assets: \_\_\_\_\_% Cash or Cash Equivalents: \_\_\_\_\_% Other: \_\_\_\_\_%

**b** Provide the average duration of the Investment-Grade Debt and Interest Rate Hedging Assets:  
 0-5 years  5-10 years  10-15 years  15 years or more

**20 PBGC missed contribution reporting requirements.** If this is a multiemployer plan or a single-employer plan that is not covered by PBGC, skip line 20.

**a** Is the amount of unpaid minimum required contributions for all years from Schedule SB (Form 5500) line 40 greater than zero?  Yes  No

**b** If line 20a is "Yes," has PBGC been notified as required by ERISA sections 4043(c)(5) and/or 303(k)(4)? Check the applicable box:  
 Yes.  
 No. Reporting was waived under 29 CFR 4043.25(c)(2) because contributions equal to or exceeding the unpaid minimum required contribution were made by the 30th day after the due date.  
 No. The 30-day period referenced in 29 CFR 4043.25(c)(2) has not yet ended, and the sponsor intends to make a contribution equal to or exceeding the unpaid minimum required contribution by the 30th day after the due date.  
 No. Other. Provide explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part VII IRS Compliance Questions**

**21a** Does the plan satisfy the coverage and nondiscrimination tests of Code sections 410(b) and 401(a)(4) by combining this plan with any other plans under the permissive aggregation rules?  Yes  No

**21b** If this is a Code section 401(k) plan, check all boxes that apply to indicate how the plan is intended to satisfy the nondiscrimination requirements for employee deferrals and employer matching contributions (as applicable) under Code sections 401(k)(3) and 401(m)(2).  
 Design-based safe harbor method  
 "Prior year" ADP test  
 "Current year" ADP test  
 N/A

**22** If the plan sponsor is an adopter of a pre-approved plan that received a favorable IRS Opinion Letter, enter the date of the Opinion Letter 11 / 30 / 2020 (MM/DD/YYYY) and the Opinion Letter serial number Q704379A.

**ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES**  
**401(k) PLAN**  
*Chicago, Illinois*

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023**

**(See independent auditors' report)**

**ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES**  
**401(k) PLAN**  
*Chicago, Illinois*

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
*December 31, 2024 and 2023*

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## **INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT**

To the Plan Administrator  
Ascend Technologies 401(k) Plan  
Chicago, Illinois

### **Scope and Nature of the ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) Audit**

We have performed audits of the accompanying financial statements of the Ascend Technologies 401(k) Plan (“the Plan”), an employee benefit plan subject to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (“ERISA”), as permitted by ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) [“ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) audit”]. The financial statements comprise the statements of net assets available for benefits as of December 31, 2024 and 2023, and the related statement of changes in net assets available for benefits for the year ended December 31, 2024, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management, having determined it is permissible in the circumstances, has elected to have the audits of the Plan’s financial statements performed in accordance with ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) pursuant to 29 CFR 2520.103-8 of the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA. As permitted by ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C), our audits need not extend to any statements or information related to assets held for investment of the Plan (“investment information”) by a bank or similar institution or insurance carrier that is regulated, supervised, and subject to periodic examination by a state or federal agency, provided that the statements or information regarding assets so held are prepared and certified to by the bank or similar institution or insurance carrier in accordance with 29 CFR 2520.103-5 of the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA (“qualified institution”).

Management has obtained certifications from a qualified institution as of December 31, 2024 and 2023, and for the year ended December 31, 2024, stating that the certified investment information, as described in Note 3 to the financial statements, is complete and accurate.

### **Opinion**

In our opinion, based on our audits and on the procedures performed as described in the Auditors’ Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section:

- The amounts and disclosures in the financial statements referred to above, other than those agreed to or derived from the certified investment information, are presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.
- The information in the financial statements referred to above related to assets held by and certified to by a qualified institution agrees to, or is derived from, in all material respects, the information prepared and certified by an institution that management determined meets the requirements of ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C).

## **Basis for Opinion**

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (“GAAS”). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors’ Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Plan and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audits. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) audit opinion.

## **Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements**

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. Management's election of the ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) audit does not affect management's responsibility for the financial statements.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Plan's ability to continue as a going concern for one year after the date that the financial statements are available to be issued.

Management is also responsible for maintaining a current plan instrument, including all plan amendments, administering the plan, and determining that the plan's transactions that are presented and disclosed in the financial statements are in conformity with the plan's provisions, including maintaining sufficient records with respect to each of the participants, to determine the benefits due or which may become due to such participants.

## **Auditors’ Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements**

Except as described in the Scope and Nature of the ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) Audit section of our report, our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors’ report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Plan's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Plan's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

Our audits did not extend to the certified investment information, except for obtaining and reading the certification, comparing the certified investment information with the related information presented and disclosed in the financial statements, and reading the disclosures relating to the certified investment information to assess whether they are in accordance with the presentation and disclosure requirements of accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Accordingly, the objective of an ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) audit is not to express an opinion about whether the financial statements as a whole are presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

#### **Supplemental Schedules Required by ERISA**

The supplemental schedules of Schedule H, Part IV, Line 4(a) – Schedule of Delinquent Participant Contributions and Schedule H, Part IV, Line 4(i) – Schedule of Assets (Held At End of Year) as of and for the year ended December 31, 2024 are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the financial statements but are supplementary information required by the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. The information included in the supplemental schedules, other than that agreed to or derived from the certified investment information, has been subjected to auditing procedures applied in the audits of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with GAAS. For information included in the supplemental schedules that agreed to or is derived from the certified investment information, we compared such information to the related certified investment information.

In forming our opinion on the supplemental schedules, we evaluated whether the supplemental schedules, other than the information agreed to or derived from the certified investment information, including their form and content, are presented in conformity with the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA.

In our opinion:

- The form and content of the supplemental schedules, other than the information in the supplemental schedules that agreed to or is derived from the certified investment information, are presented, in all material respects, in conformity with the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA.

- The information in the supplemental schedules related to assets held by and certified to by a qualified institution agrees to, or is derived from, in all material respects, the information prepared and certified by an institution that management determined meets the requirements of ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C).

*Mowery & Schoenfeld LLC*

Mowery & Schoenfeld, LLC

Lincolnshire, Illinois  
September 17, 2025

**ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES 401(k) PLAN**

**STATEMENTS OF NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS**

**DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023**

---

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Investments, at fair value (Notes 3 and 4):		
Pooled separate accounts	\$ 9,199,645	\$ 8,869,466
Investments, at contract value (Notes 3 and 5):		
Fixed investment account	28,839	173,445
Total investments	<u>9,228,484</u>	<u>9,042,911</u>
Receivables:		
Employer contribution	4,552	831
Notes receivable from participants (Note 3)	101,089	62,335
Total receivables	<u>105,641</u>	<u>63,166</u>
Total assets	<u>9,334,125</u>	<u>9,106,077</u>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Excess contributions payable (Note 2)	<u>25,265</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS</b>	<u>\$ 9,308,860</u>	<u>\$ 9,106,077</u>

See accompanying notes to the financial statements.

**ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES 401(k) PLAN**

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024**

**ADDITIONS**

Additions to net assets attributed to:

Investment income:

Net appreciation in fair value of investments	\$ 1,099,824
Interest and dividends	515,292
Total investment income	<u>1,615,116</u>

Interest income on notes receivable from participants 6,965

Contributions:

Employer	407,606
Participants	1,217,728
Rollover	407,545
Total contributions	<u>2,032,879</u>

Total additions 3,654,960

**DEDUCTIONS**

Deductions from net assets attributed to:

Benefits paid to participants	3,384,446
Administrative expenses	67,731
Total deductions	<u>3,452,177</u>

**NET INCREASE IN NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS** 202,783

Net assets available for benefits:

Beginning of year 9,106,077

End of year \$ 9,308,860

See accompanying notes to the financial statements.

# **ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES 401(k) PLAN**

## **NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023**

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### **NOTE 1 – DESCRIPTION OF PLAN**

The following description of the Ascend Technologies 401(k) Plan provides only general information. Participants should refer to the Plan agreement for a more complete description of the Plan's provisions.

#### **General**

The Plan, established January 1, 2020, is a qualified defined contribution plan sponsored by Ascend Technologies, LLC ("the Company"). The Plan covers all non-union employees. Employees are immediately eligible to participate in the salary deferral and rollover contributions of the Plan when hired by the Company, subject to entry dates on the first day of the month following the date of satisfaction of the eligibility requirements. Employees are eligible to participate in the matching and profit-sharing contributions portion of the Plan after completing one year of service (at least 1,000 hours) with the Company. The Plan is subject to the provisions of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 ("ERISA").

#### **Participant Contributions**

Participants may contribute up to the maximum dollar amount allowable as established by the Internal Revenue Service, as defined in the Plan. Participants may also contribute amounts representing distributions from other qualified benefit or contribution plans. Participants direct the investment of their contributions into various investment options offered by the Plan. The Plan currently offers investment options through Empower Annuity Insurance Company of America and Empower Trust Company, LLC, the custodians of the Plan's investments.

#### **Employer Contributions**

The Plan allows for a discretionary matching contribution determined by the Company each year in addition to discretionary profit-sharing. The Company made or accrued discretionary matching contributions of \$412,186 to the Plan for the year ended December 31, 2024. The Company did not make or accrue any discretionary profit-sharing contributions to the Plan for the year ended December 31, 2024.

#### **Participant Accounts**

Each participant's account is credited with the participant's contributions, qualified rollover contributions, allocations of the Company's contributions (if any), Plan earnings (losses), and charged with an allocation of administrative expenses. Allocations are based upon participant earnings (losses) or account balances, as defined by the Plan. The benefit to which a participant is entitled is the benefit that can be provided from the participant's vested account.

#### **Vesting**

Participants are immediately fully vested in their contributions and the Company's discretionary profit-sharing and matching contributions plus actual earnings (losses) thereon.

#### **Notes Receivable from Participants**

Participants may borrow from their fund accounts a minimum of \$1,000 up to a maximum equal to the lesser of \$50,000 or 50% of their vested account balance. Loan terms range from 1 to 5 years, or more for the purchase of a primary residence. Each loan is secured by the balance in the participant's account and bears interest at prime plus 1% on the date of issuance. Interest rates ranged from 4.25% to 9.50% as of December 31, 2024. Principal and interest are paid ratably through regular payroll deductions.

## **ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES 401(k) PLAN**

### **NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023**

---

#### **NOTE 1 – DESCRIPTION OF PLAN (continued)**

##### **Payment of Benefits**

On termination of service due to death, disability, retirement, or any other reason, a participant may elect to receive a lump-sum amount equal to the value of the participant's vested interest in his or her account. In addition, hardship withdrawals and in-service distributions at age 59 ½ from certain accounts are permitted if certain criteria are met. The Plan document also requires post-severance mandatory force-out distributions for account balances under \$5,000.

##### **Forfeited Accounts**

The Plan maintains a non-vested forfeiture account. Forfeited balances of terminated participant's non-vested accounts may be used by the Company to pay Plan expenses or used to reduce any discretionary employer contributions. Forfeited non-vested accounts totaled \$4,079 and \$4,556 at December 31, 2024 and 2023, respectively. During the year ended December 31, 2024, forfeitures of \$4,580 were used to reduce employer contributions.

#### **NOTE 2 – SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

##### **Basis of Accounting**

The financial statements of the Plan are prepared under the accrual method of accounting.

##### **Use of Estimates**

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires the plan administrator to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and changes therein, and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities. Actual results may differ from those estimates.

##### **Investment Valuation and Income Recognition**

The Plan's investments are reported at fair value with the exception of the fully benefit-responsive investment contract which is reported at contract value. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. The plan administrator determines the Plan's valuation policies utilizing information provided by the custodian. Refer to Note 4 for discussion of fair value measurements.

Investments held by a defined contribution plan are required to be reported at fair value, except for fully benefit-responsive investment contracts. Contract value is the relevant measure for the portion of the net assets available for benefits of a defined contribution plan attributable to fully benefit-responsive investment contracts because contract value is the amount participants normally would receive if they were to initiate permitted transactions under the terms of the Plan.

Purchases and sales of securities are recorded on a trade-date basis. Interest income is recorded on the accrual basis. Dividends are recorded on the ex-dividend date. Net appreciation (depreciation) includes the Plan's gains and losses on investments bought and sold as well as held during the year.

Management fees and operating expenses charged to the Plan for investments in pooled separate accounts and the group annuity contract are deducted from income earned on a daily basis and not separately reflected. Consequently, management fees and operating expenses are reflected as a reduction of investment return for such investments.

**ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES 401(k) PLAN**

**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023**

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**NOTE 2 – SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)**

**Notes Receivable from Participants**

Notes receivable from participants are measured at their unpaid balance plus any accrued but unpaid interest. Interest income is recorded on the accrual basis. Related fees are recorded as administrative expenses and are expensed when they are incurred. No allowance for loan losses has been recorded as of December 31, 2024 and 2023. If a participant ceases to make loan repayments and the plan administrator deems the note receivable to be in default, the participant loan balance is reduced; and a benefit payment is recorded.

**Excess Contributions Payable**

Amounts payable to participants for contributions made in excess of allowable amounts are recorded as a liability with a corresponding reduction to participant contributions. Excess contributions payable totaled \$25,265 as of December 31, 2024. There were no excess contributions payable as of December 31, 2023. The Plan refunded the excess contributions to participants subsequent to year-end.

**Payment of Benefits**

Benefits are recorded when paid.

**Administrative Expenses**

Certain expenses of maintaining the Plan are paid directly by the Company and are excluded from these financial statements. Fees related to the administration of notes receivable from participants are charged directly to the participant's account and are included in administrative expenses. Investment-related expenses are included as a reduction in net appreciation or an increase to net depreciation of fair value of investments. The Plan made direct payments for administration fees of \$67,731 for the year ended December 31, 2024.

**SECURE Act 2.0 Provisions**

The Plan adopted certain Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement Act ("SECURE Act 2.0") provisions as outlined below.

*Increase in Age for Required Beginning Date for Mandatory Distributions*

Participants are generally required to begin taking distributions from their retirement plans at age 72. The new provision increased the required minimum distribution age to 73 starting on January 1, 2023, and increases the age further to 75 starting on January 1, 2033.

*Roth Plan Required Minimum Distribution Rules*

Under previous law, required minimum distributions are not required to begin prior to the death of the owner of a Roth IRA. However, pre-death distributions are required in the case of the owner of a Roth designated account in an employer retirement plan (e.g., 401(k) plan). The new provision eliminated the pre-death distribution requirement for Roth accounts in employer plans, effective for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2023. This provision does not apply to distributions which are required with respect to years beginning before January 1, 2024, but are permitted to be paid on or after such date.

Although no formal amendment has yet been made related to these provisions, the Plan sponsor intends to amend the Plan for SECURE Act 2.0 provisions adopted prior to December 31, 2026.

## ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES 401(k) PLAN

### NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

#### DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023

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#### NOTE 2 – SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

##### Subsequent Events

Management has evaluated subsequent events through September 17, 2025, the date on which the financial statements were available to be issued. There were no subsequent events requiring recognition or disclosure in these financial statements, except as described in Note 11.

#### NOTE 3 – INFORMATION PREPARED AND CERTIFIED BY THE CUSTODIANS

The following information included in the accompanying financial statements and supplemental information as of December 31 was obtained from data that has been prepared and certified to as complete and accurate by the custodians of the Plan, Empower Annuity Insurance Company of America and Empower Trust Company, LLC:

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Investments, at fair value:		
Pooled separate accounts	\$ 9,199,645	\$ 8,869,466
Investment, at contract value:		
Fixed investment account	28,839	173,445
Notes receivable from participants	101,089	62,335

The custodians also certified the completeness and accuracy of \$1,099,824 of net appreciation in the value of investments, \$515,292 of dividends and interest, and \$6,965 of interest income on notes receivable from participants related to the aforementioned assets for the year ended December 31, 2024.

#### NOTE 4 – FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

Financial Accounting Standards Board Accounting Standards Codification 820, *Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures* (“FASB ASC 820”), provides the framework for measuring fair value. That framework provides a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value. The hierarchy gives the highest priority to unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities (level 1 measurements) and the lowest priority to unobservable inputs (level 3 measurements). The three levels of the fair value hierarchy under FASB ASC 820 are described as follows:

Level 1 – Inputs to the valuation methodology are unadjusted quoted prices for identical assets or liabilities in active markets that the Plan has the ability to access.

Level 2 – Inputs to the valuation methodology include the following:

- quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities in active markets
- quoted prices for identical or similar assets or liabilities in inactive markets
- inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the asset or liability
- inputs that are derived principally from, or corroborated by, observable market data by correlation or other means.

If the asset or liability has a specified (contractual) term, the level 2 input must be observable for substantially the full term of the asset or liability.

Level 3 – Inputs to the valuation methodology are unobservable and significant to the fair value measurement.

**ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES 401(k) PLAN**

**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023**

**NOTE 4 – FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS (continued)**

The asset or liability's fair value measurement level within the fair value hierarchy is based on the lowest level of any input that is significant to the fair value measurement. Valuation techniques used need to maximize the use of observable inputs and minimize the use of unobservable inputs.

Following is a description of the valuation methodology used for assets measured at fair value. There have been no changes in the valuation methodologies used at December 31, 2024 and 2023.

*Pooled separate accounts:* Pooled separate accounts (“PSAs”) are privately managed through investment companies and are not publicly traded. PSA’s are comprised, primarily, of shares of registered investment companies held through sub-accounts of an insurance company. The PSAs are valued using net asset value (“NAV”) as a practical expedient to estimate fair value where NAV is based on the value of the underlying investment assets held through sub-accounts of a separate account of an insurance company. This practical expedient is not used when it is determined to be probable that the account will sell the investment for an amount different from the reported NAV. The Plan has concluded that the NAVs reported by the investment companies approximate the fair value of the investments. There are currently no redemption restrictions or unfunded commitments on these investments. The investment strategy of the PSAs is to provide growth, income, and conservation of capital.

The preceding method described may produce a fair value calculation that may not be indicative of net realizable value or reflective of future fair values. Furthermore, although the Plan believes its valuation methods are appropriate and consistent with other market participants, the use of different methodologies or assumptions to determine the fair value of certain financial instruments could result in a different fair value measurement at the reporting date.

The following table sets forth by level, within the fair value hierarchy, the Plan's assets at fair value as of:

	<b><u>December 31, 2024</u></b>			
	<u>Level 1</u>	<u>Level 2</u>	<u>Level 3</u>	<u>Total</u>
Investments measured at NAV*	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,199,645
Investments, at fair value				<u>\$ 9,199,645</u>
	<b><u>December 31, 2023</u></b>			
	<u>Level 1</u>	<u>Level 2</u>	<u>Level 3</u>	<u>Total</u>
Investments measured at NAV*	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 8,869,466
Investments, at fair value				<u>\$ 8,869,466</u>

\*Certain investments that were measured at NAV per share (or its equivalent) as a practical expedient have not been classified in the fair value hierarchy. The fair value amounts presented in these tables for such investments are intended to permit reconciliation of the fair value hierarchy to the investments, at fair value, presented in the statement of net assets available for benefits.

**ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES 401(k) PLAN**

**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023**

**NOTE 4 – FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS (continued)**

The following table summarizes investments for which fair value is measured using the NAV per share practical expedient as of December 31, 2024 and 2023, respectively. There are no participant redemption restrictions for these investments; the redemption notice period is applicable only to the Plan.

	<b>As of December 31, 2024</b>			
	<u>Fair Value</u>	<u>Unfunded Commitment</u>	<u>Redemption Frequency</u>	<u>Redemption Notice</u>
Pooled separate accounts	\$ 9,199,645	\$ -	Daily	5 business days
	<u>\$ 9,199,645</u>	<u>\$ -</u>		

  

	<b>As of December 31, 2023</b>			
	<u>Fair Value</u>	<u>Unfunded Commitment</u>	<u>Redemption Frequency</u>	<u>Redemption Notice</u>
Pooled separate accounts	\$ 8,869,466	\$ -	Daily	5 business days
	<u>\$ 8,869,466</u>	<u>\$ -</u>		

Investments in the pooled separate accounts can be redeemed immediately at the participant level and may occur each business day. Were the Plan to initiate a full redemption of the pooled separate accounts, the investment adviser reserves the right to temporarily delay withdrawal from the Plan (specific to each redemption) in order to ensure that securities liquidations will be carried out in an orderly business manner.

**NOTE 5 – FIXED INTEREST INVESTMENT CONTRACT**

The Plan’s investment options include the MassMutual Group Annuity Contract (“the Fund”), which is a traditional fully benefit-responsive investment contract. The Fund maintains the contributions in a general account. Investments held in the Fund totaled \$28,839 and \$173,445 at December 31, 2024 and 2023, respectively. The investment contract issuer is contractually obligated to repay the principal and a specified interest rate to the Plan. The crediting rate is based on a formula established by the contract issuer. The crediting rate is reviewed on a quarterly basis for resetting. The average yield based on the interest rate credited to participants was 2.80% for the year ended December 31, 2024. The guaranteed investment contract does not permit the insurance company to terminate the agreement prior to the scheduled maturity date.

This contract meets the fully benefit-responsive investment contract criteria and therefore is reported at contract value. Contract value is the relevant measure for fully benefit-responsive investment contracts because this is the amount received by participants if they were to initiate permitted transactions under the terms of the Plan. Contract value, as reported to the Plan by the Fund, represents contributions made under the contract, plus earnings, less participant withdrawals, and administrative expenses. Participants may ordinarily direct the withdrawal or transfer of all or a portion of their investment at contract value.

## **ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES 401(k) PLAN**

### **NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

#### **DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023**

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##### **NOTE 5 – FIXED INTEREST INVESTMENT CONTRACT (continued)**

Certain events might limit the ability of the Plan to transact at contract value with the issuer. Such events include the following: (1) amendments to the Plan documents (including complete or partial Plan termination or merger with another plan), (2) changes to the Plan's prohibition on competing investment options or deletion of equity wash provisions, (3) bankruptcy of the Plan sponsor or other Plan sponsor events (for example, divestitures or spin-off's of a subsidiary) that cause a significant withdrawal from the Plan, (4) the failure of the trust to qualify for exemption from federal income taxes or any required prohibited transaction exemption under ERISA, or (5) premature termination of the contract. No events are probable of occurring that might limit the ability of the Plan to transact at contract value with the contract issuers and that also would limit the ability of the Plan to transact at contract value with the participants.

In addition, certain events allow the issuer to terminate the contract with the Plan and settle at an amount different from contract value. Such events include (1) an uncured violation of the Plan's investment guidelines, (2) a breach of material obligation under the contract, (3) a material misrepresentation, or (4) a material amendment to the agreement without the consent of the issuer.

The Plan's ability to receive amounts due is dependent on the issuer's ability to meet its financial obligations. The issuer's ability to meet its contractual obligations may be affected by future economic and regulatory developments.

##### **NOTE 6 – RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS AND PARTY-IN-INTEREST TRANSACTIONS**

Certain plan investments are pooled separate accounts and fixed annuities managed by Empower Annuity Insurance Company of America and Empower Trust Company, LLC, the custodians of the Plan; and, therefore, these transactions qualify as party-in-interest transactions under ERISA. Fees paid by the Plan for investment management services were included as a reduction of the return earned on each investment.

As described in Note 2, the Company may pay certain expenses related to plan operations to various service providers. In addition, employees of the Company provide administrative services to the Plan for which no fees are charged. These transactions are party-in-interest transactions under ERISA.

Notes receivable from participants also qualify as party-in-interest transactions under ERISA.

##### **NOTE 7 – TAX STATUS**

On November 30, 2020, the Internal Revenue Service stated that the non-standardized pre-approved plan document adopted by the Plan, as then designed, qualified under Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code ("IRC"). Although the Plan has not received a determination letter specific to the Plan itself, and the Plan has been amended since the basic plan document was adopted, the plan administrator believes that the Plan is designed and is being operated in compliance with the applicable requirements of the IRC. Therefore, the plan administrator believes that the Plan is qualified, and the related trust is tax-exempt.

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require plan management to evaluate tax positions taken by the Plan and recognize a tax liability (or asset) if the Plan has taken an uncertain position that more likely than not would not be sustained upon examination by the Internal Revenue Service. No assets or liabilities relative to uncertain tax positions are recorded as of December 31, 2024 and 2023. The Plan is subject to routine audits by taxing jurisdictions. However, as of December 31, 2024, there were no audits in progress for any open tax periods.

## **ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES 401(k) PLAN**

### **NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023**

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#### **NOTE 8 – PLAN TERMINATION**

Although it has not expressed any intent to do so, the Company has the right under the Plan to discontinue its contributions at any time and to terminate the Plan subject to the provisions of ERISA. In the event of Plan termination, participants would become 100% vested in their accounts.

#### **NOTE 9 – RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES**

The Plan invests in a variety of investment securities. Investment securities are exposed to various risks such as interest rate risk, market, and credit risks. Due to the level of risk associated with certain investment securities, it is at least reasonably possible that changes in the values of investment securities will occur in the near term and that such changes could materially affect participants' account balances and the amounts reported in the statement of net assets available for benefits.

#### **NOTE 10 – PROHIBITED TRANSACTIONS**

During the 2022 plan year, the plan sponsor failed to deposit certain participant contributions within the required timeframe as stipulated by the U.S. Department of Labor ("DOL"). The DOL considers late deposits to be prohibited transactions as disclosed in the accompanying supplemental information. The plan sponsor intends to correct the 2022 deficiencies in 2025.

#### **NOTE 11 – SUBSEQUENT EVENTS**

The Plan was frozen and all contributions were suspended effective January 1, 2025. Management has approved a plan of merger with and into the Ascend/L-Edafio Technologies, LLC 401(k) Plan (formerly named the Edafio Technologies, LLC 401(k) Plan) that is expected to occur during the third quarter of 2025. All employees of Ascend Technologies, LLC were immediately eligible and able to enroll in the Ascend/L-Edafio Technologies LLC 401(k) Plan as of January 1, 2025. Under the new merged plan, employees will be automatically enrolled when eligible at a pretax deferral of 4%.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**

**ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES 401(k) PLAN**

**SCHEDULE H, PART IV, LINE 4(a) – SCHEDULE OF DELINQUENT PARTICIPANT CONTRIBUTIONS**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024**

**(See independent auditors' report)**

Name of plan sponsor: Ascend Technologies, LLC  
 Employer identification number: 84-3811689  
 Plan number: 001

<b>Participant Contributions Transferred Late to the Plan</b>			<b>Total that Constitute Nonexempt Prohibited Transactions</b>			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Check here if late participant loan repayments are included.			<b>Contributions Corrected Outside VFCP</b>	<b>Contributions Pending Correction in VFCP</b>	<b>Total Fully Corrected Under VFCP and PTE 2002-51</b>
<b>Amount Withheld</b>	<b>Date Withheld</b>	<b>Date Remitted</b>	<b>Contributions Not Corrected</b>			
\$ 65,260 ^	08/15/22	09/02/22	\$ 65,260	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<u>\$ 65,260</u>			<u>\$ 65,260</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

^ The calendar year 2022 delinquent contribution was remitted in 2022 and lost earnings will be corrected outside VFCP in 2025.

**ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES 401(k) PLAN**

**SCHEDULE H, PART IV, LINE 4(i) – SCHEDULE OF ASSETS (HELD AT END OF YEAR)**

**DECEMBER 31, 2024**

**(See independent auditors' report)**

Name of plan sponsor: Ascend Technologies, LLC  
Employer identification number: 84-3811689  
Plan number: 001

(a)	(b) Identity of issuer, borrower, lessor, or similar party	(c) Description of investment including maturity date, rate of interest, collateral, par, or maturity value	(d) Cost	(e) Current value
		<u>Pooled Separate Accounts:</u>		
	Allspring Global Investments	Allspring Special Mid Cap Value R6	**	\$ 27,870
	American Funds	American Funds New World R6	**	98,197
	Franklin Templeton Investments	Brandywine Global Opportunities Bond Is	**	177,591
	BlackRock	Ishares Russell 2000 Small-Cap Idx K	**	20,084
	Franklin Templeton Investments	Clearbridge Large Cap Growth Is	**	1,609,583
	BlackRock	Ishares Russell Mid-Cap Index K	**	13,891
	Franklin Templeton Investments	Clearbridge Mid Cap Is	**	236,019
	Columbia Threadneedle	Columbia Small Cap Growth Inst3	**	776,052
	Wilmington Trust, N.A	Franklin Total Advantage 2025 R6	**	79,828
	Wilmington Trust, N.A	Franklin Total Advantage 2030 R6	**	401,549
	Wilmington Trust, N.A	Franklin Total Advantage 2035 R6	**	109,237
	Wilmington Trust, N.A	Franklin Total Advantage 2040 R6	**	224,142
	Wilmington Trust, N.A	Franklin Total Advantage 2045 R6	**	612,043
	Wilmington Trust, N.A	Franklin Total Advantage 2050 R6	**	651,262
	Wilmington Trust, N.A	Franklin Total Advantage 2055 R6	**	352,605
	Wilmington Trust, N.A	Franklin Total Advantage 2060 R6	**	340,361
	Wilmington Trust, N.A	Franklin Total Advantage Ret Fund R6	**	353
	Hartford Funds	Hartford Schroders Intl Multi-Cap Val Sdr	**	6,771
	JPMorgan	JPMorgan Equity Income R6	**	50,150
	JPMorgan	JPMorgan US Equity R6	**	133,669
	JPMorgan	JPMorgan Mid Cap Growth R6	**	279,907
	Lord Abbett	Lord Abbett Bond Debenture R6	**	18,069
*	MassMutual	Massmutual Core Bond I	**	53,587
	MFS Investment Management	MFS International Growth R6	**	225,551
*	MassMutual	MM S&P 500 Index I	**	1,368,891
	PGIM	PGIM High Yield R6	**	171,241
	Vanguard	Vanguard Total Intl Stock Index Adm	**	17,271
	Vanguard	Vanguard Growth Index Admiral	**	546,723
	Vanguard	Vanguard Mid-Cap Growth Index Admiral	**	19,895
	Vanguard	Vanguard Mid-Cap Value Index Admiral	**	106,763
	Vanguard	Vanguard Small Cap Growth Index Admiral	**	21,849
	Vanguard	Vanguard Small Cap Value Index Admiral	**	38,751
	Vanguard	Vanguard Value Index Adm	**	81,671
	Vanguard	Vanguard Total Intl Stock Adm	**	300,302
	Victory Capital	Victory Integrity Small-Cap Value R6	**	27,917
	Total pooled separate accounts			<u>9,199,645</u>
		<u>Insurance Company General Account:</u>		
*	MassMutual	Fixed investment account	**	28,839
		<u>Notes Receivable From Participants:</u>		
*	Participant loans	Interest rates ranging from at 4.25% to 9.5%	- 0 -	<u>101,089</u>
	Total			<u>\$ 9,329,573</u>

\* Indicates a party in interest

\*\* Cost omitted for participant-directed investments.

**ASCEND TECHNOLOGIES 401(k) PLAN**

**SCHEDULE H, PART IV, LINE 4(i) – SCHEDULE OF ASSETS (HELD AT END OF YEAR)**

**DECEMBER 31, 2024**

**(See independent auditors' report)**

Name of plan sponsor: Ascend Technologies, LLC  
Employer identification number: 84-3811689  
Plan number: 001

(a)	(b) Identity of issuer, borrower, lessor, or similar party	(c) Description of investment including maturity date, rate of interest, collateral, par, or maturity value	(d) Cost	(e) Current value
		<u>Pooled Separate Accounts:</u>		
	Allspring Global Investments	Allspring Special Mid Cap Value R6	**	\$ 27,870
	American Funds	American Funds New World R6	**	98,197
	Franklin Templeton Investments	Brandywine Global Opportunities Bond Is	**	177,591
	BlackRock	Ishares Russell 2000 Small-Cap Idx K	**	20,084
	Franklin Templeton Investments	Clearbridge Large Cap Growth Is	**	1,609,583
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	Hartford Funds	Hartford Schroders Intl Multi-Cap Val Sdr	**	6,771
	JPMorgan	JPMorgan Equity Income R6	**	50,150
	JPMorgan	JPMorgan US Equity R6	**	133,669
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	Lord Abbett	Lord Abbett Bond Debenture R6	**	18,069
*	MassMutual	Massmutual Core Bond I	**	53,587
	MFS Investment Management	MFS International Growth R6	**	225,551
*	MassMutual	MM S&P 500 Index I	**	1,368,891
	PGIM	PGIM High Yield R6	**	171,241
	Vanguard	Vanguard Total Intl Stock Index Adm	**	17,271
	Vanguard	Vanguard Growth Index Admiral	**	546,723
	Vanguard	Vanguard Mid-Cap Growth Index Admiral	**	19,895
	Vanguard	Vanguard Mid-Cap Value Index Admiral	**	106,763
	Vanguard	Vanguard Small Cap Growth Index Admiral	**	21,849
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	Vanguard	Vanguard Value Index Adm	**	81,671
	Vanguard	Vanguard Total Intl Stock Adm	**	300,302
	Victory Capital	Victory Integrity Small-Cap Value R6	**	27,917
	Total pooled separate accounts			<u>9,199,645</u>
		<u>Insurance Company General Account:</u>		
*	MassMutual	Fixed investment account	**	28,839
		<u>Notes Receivable From Participants:</u>		
*	Participant loans	Interest rates ranging from at 4.25% to 9.5%	- 0 -	<u>101,089</u>
	Total			<u>\$ 9,329,573</u>

\* Indicates a party in interest

\*\* Cost omitted for participant-directed investments.