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Major Win for Car Consumers and Small Businesses

Right to Repair/Yes on 1 Coalition Celebrates - press release

Boston- The Massachusetts Right to Repair Coalition today declared a resounding victory on ballot Question 1. Tommy Hickey, the Director of the coalition addressed supporters in a (downloadable) video released this evening: "By voting yes on 1, Massachusetts has now updated Right to Repair for the modern age of connected cars." Hickey said Yes on 1 had been outspent by millions, but that voters understood what was at stake. "The thousands of 'Yes on 1' signs in front of small businesses around the state tell the story---auto makers were trying to corner the market on car repairs, but the voters stopped them." Hickey said the voters sent a clear mandate: "The people have spoken---by a huge margin---in favor of immediately updating right to repair so it applies to today's high-tech cars and trucks." The team behind the Yes on 1 victory included: Brian S. Hickey Associates – Lobbying, Public Affairs, Grassroots Gray Media – Strategy, Media, Digital SRCPmedia – Advertising Beacon Research – Polling Question 1 stated that vehicle manufacturers must make available all mechanical information needed to diagnose and repair cars as well as perform routine maintenance starting with 2022 models, over a secure open access platform that independent repair shops can access, when authorized by the car's owner. "We can now easily implement for the 2022 model year this new digital platform. The auto makers and their army of lobbyists will make noise and make up stories, saying 'it can't be done,' just like they did during the campaign," said Hickey. "But remember, they said the exact same thing about implementing the first right to repair in 2012 and now admit that they were wrong."





I think we can all agree that 2020 was one heck of a year. It combined the 1918 Spanish Flu epidemic, the 1930's Dust Bowl/Depression, fires, hurricanes and the riots from the 1960's all in one year! I really do hope that 2021 calms down a little and we

can all go back to selling Tires in peace.

And now...onto something completely different. Back in October, Sally and I hooked up our Airstream to the hitch of my all-black-Dodge Ram and headed out for the hinterlands. A falling branch and a rather more solid falling brick from one of our chimneys had created matching dents in the curved roof sections of the camper, so...insurance money in hand...we set out for Jackson Center, Ohio, to have the Airstream factory replace and repair our beloved tin can.

Thirteen hours straight, each way! We are so used to being able to drive through multiple states here in New England in an hour or two, that we don't really appreciate that other parts of the country are different. Pennsylvania took more than six hours to drive through, and Ohio was at least four!

But we did get to drive through Akron, Ohio, and behold...upon the skyline was the Goodyear Hall with its iconic "Go...Go...Goodyear" sign from the clock tower at the site of the old (now gone) East Market Street Plant. Nearby was the twin tower, built only one year later in 1916 on Innovation Way at the Technical Center. So, that was rather thrilling to see.

It took a few days at the Airstream Facility, but I have to say that they treated us...and ALL their customers like royalty. They were courteous, they explained exactly what the repairs consisted of, they had a lavish waiting room, with free wi-fi with coffee and hot chocolate and other drinks on the house, pristine bathrooms, and free overnight camping spots.

This was a picture-perfect example of excellent customer service, and a reminder of what we should all be striving to achieve in our own dealerships. A fitting example that good service is what brings people back. After all, the customer is responsible for paying your salary and keeping your lights on! It is important to emphasize that the Airstream technician brought our trailer into the shop in order to complete a thorough analysis of the required repairs. An estimate was prepared, followed by an in-person

review of their findings, with us in the shop. This included 20 hours of labor, plus the necessary parts and supplies.

It is important to note that we had previously obtained an estimate from our dealer, (remember...this is the repair facility at the factory) and to our surprise, the factory shop quoted us HALF of the dealer's price. Needless to say, we asked a lot of questions before authorizing them to proceed.

At the end of day three, about 20 hours of shop time had passed. We were enjoying our complimentary coffee when the service manager approached and said..." there is a problem".

Oh boy, here we go. It turned out that in addition to our original dents, they had found that the dealership where we bought it, hadn't repaired the automatic awning correctly. The factory guys not only repaired the awning, but they also repaired the wiring harness for the bedroom and bathroom, at no additional cost!


Imagine our amazement. "No charge" are words seldom spoken to a customer in anyone's shop. Needless to say, we will not be taking our future business to anyone else. It was worth the 13-hour drive to Ohio for us to be treated as if we were life-long customers on our first visit!

Upon returning to work, I realized that every customer should be treated as if they were life-long customers. We never thought that a 13-hour drive was the tuition for a three-day Customer Service Seminar in Jackson Center, Ohio.

Please remember to treat people who enter your establishment as life-long friends, and not just an ATM for your business.

Thanks for listening!

Blaise



NEW ENGLAND TIRE & SERVICE ASSOCIATION

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I have noticed some companies feel they are 100% in the driver's seat more than ever when it comes to hiring, because of "higher unemployed" due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I urge our industry to not take the foot off the gas when it comes to making sure your brand has a 5-star candidate experience. If not, we will lose our talent pool

to other industries that are providing this experience.

Building a successful employer brand is tricky because the candidate's expertise lies at the core of it all. Good candidate experience is crucial to creating a successful employer brand.

As much as you concentrate on your products and distribution, focusing on your employer brand will help you look at candidates as client and treat them as if they matter to your organization's core.

Your interaction with candidates determines their impression of your service/products and the employer brand — and these initial experiences are long-lasting. That's why it's so important to be on your game in every interview and prepare your team so that they can put their best foot forward on your company's behalf.

Job applicants are becoming impatient. However, In the 2018 Talent Board survey, 37% of candidates complained about poor interaction with recruiters. The study hypothesized that candidates are less likely to engage in a flawed recruiting process in today's talent market — so giving your candidate a 5-star brand experience is vital to keeping them engaged.

We are not oblivious of the effect of COVID-19 on the high unemployment rate in some sectors. However, an increase in unemployed candidates doesn't mean candidates' 5-star brand experience should take a back seat. Hiring the best talent shouldn't be compromised based on more supply of unemployed candidates. That's why it is so important to be at your best game during the hiring process. The importance of giving a 5-star brand experience says a lot about the reputation of your company in future hiring processes.

The Talent Board's data sheds light on dark areas where companies are falling short, from the application process to the lack of details before the interview. Based on these observations, here are five techniques to make your hiring process remains a point of pride and productivity.

1. Start on the right foot, making it easy for candidates to find all the details they trust the most.

According to the Talent Board report, the overwhelming majority of applicants (70.5%) conduct their study into your company before applying. It makes the pre-application stage the ideal opportunity to set a constructive

tone for the entire hiring process. Candidates want a list of your company's core values. Highlighting your employee value proposition (EVP) can be particularly effective. Candidates are looking for answers to why people want to work in your company, so don't let them guess. Most candidates look for this information on your job section, so be sure to have many important data available.

It's the internet forever. Tweets, blog posts, PR wins and gaffes — once written, these things will never go away. The study "The Future of Recruitment" from Future Workplace surveyed 1,054 total respondents, including 616 employers and 438 job-seekers. It showed that 61% of job-seekers first visited the company's online page before applying.

2. Fast pace of the world.

With the advance in technology, job candidates share their experiences online. If they're buying a camera or looking at a mediocre interview experience, it's convenient for people to share their experiences. Trust me — a negative review travels faster than a good one. However, do not make this a fear. Instead, create a unique brand proposition and advantage around it.

Today, businesses are recognized for the quality of their workplace as they are for the quality of the services rendered. Yeah, it's cool to make a killer product, but if your company isn't a great place to work, what's the point? Candidates will not take a job with an organization with a low reputation, even though they are unemployed. Your ability to succeed in the competition and stay ahead is directly connected to attracting and retaining top talent.

3. Give the schedule and the names of the interviewers in advance.

You earn points with your applicants when you keep them updated on what their interview process would look like. When you pay attention to this kind of detail, you're showing the candidate that you're taking both them and their time seriously.

When recruiters don't communicate much about interviews, applicants are less likely to succeed. They can also see a lack of preparation or consideration, entering a vital part of the recruiting process. This approach is useful even if the interview takes place over the phone or a video call. For on-site interviews, offering a location tour will help candidates feel at ease and develop a better relationship with your company. One of the most powerful things you can do is reason what the experience you give to the candidate feels like. Think back to the last time you were interviewed. What makes the hiring process stand out? The truth is, asking yourself these questions and putting yourself in the candidate's position will help you get in touch and stay ahead.

4. Keep candidates updated on the next steps and, if possible, provide them with timely input.

Receiving feedback is extremely important for candidates. If you can provide input, you can automatically improve the candidate's experience. Speak to candidates about their strengths and areas of change and provide actionable guidance about what they should do better. Your company might

not be comfortable providing input, and that's OK, too. After the interview, you will also boost the candidate's experience by letting them know what the next steps would look like. Don't burn bridges. Create brand advocates instead. Although several candidates may not fit into your qualification first. However, industries may shift, and new opportunities may emerge. Candidates who might not be the right match may be a match in a couple of months or even a year, so never burn the bridges. To ensure you never destroy relationships, interact transparently with candidates, and be as up front as humanly as possible. Be constructive with criticism. Everyone, you interview (but don't hire) should be able to hear from you if you ever reach out in the future. Plus, this will leave you with a big, talented applicant pool to reach out if the opportunity ever occurs.

5. First experience matters

Candidate's first impression of your company will remain with them throughout the entire process — so make it count. Similarly, a wrong candidate's experience will lead to a bad review of your goods or services, which is never good for business. To deal with this, make sure you take the little moves; you need to go above and beyond. Send customized follow-up emails to applicants and ensure that each applicant receives a response, regardless of whether it is negative or positive. Train your team on how to interview them correctly, be welcoming when applicants arrive and learn to deal with difficult interview situations. Taking the extra time to make applicants feel comfortable and valuable will set you apart as an employer. When it comes to the candidate's experience, small actions can have a significant effect. With candidates in charge and the internet as their "megaphone," companies must concentrate relentlessly on their employer

brand and continually strive to prove to those prospective candidates that they are fit, not the other way around.

One of the most relevant and ignored contact fields is not just with prospective candidates or current workers; although they are crucial; it's with the applicants whom you refused to recruit. Change the focus of the discussion from dissatisfaction to appreciation.

These methods help companies ensure that candidates do not reflexively dislike your business. Generally, it's all about going that extra mile, and it doesn't cost that much at all, compared to the negative impact that a candidate might have on your brand or company. Let people know you're honored that they've chosen you to apply for, even if you can't hire them right now. A combination of a successful recruitment process and a laser emphasis on the candidate's experience will create a strong employer brand, help attract and retain rock star candidates and workers and drive your company's success.

Mike Cioffi is the Founder of Tire Talent a boutique recruiting firm that specializes in our industry.

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Selling a Business in 2021: A Paradox of Unique Opportunity & Uncertainty The Road Runner Winter 2020

By Art Blumenthal MBA, CBI • Nationwide Automotive Aftermarket Business Broker



It's almost time to say goodbye to 2020. With COVID-19 cases surging nationally in December, most of us will be happy to bid farewell to 2020 and usher in a New Year. The upcoming vaccine gives us hope to start off on confident note, helping to set the pace for a positive rebound in the coming months. The New Year 2021 will present us with a chance to renew our commitment to our businesses, to our family and to ourselves.

For those of you contemplating a resolution to retire from your business in 2021, these final weeks are your opportunity to take action steps to maximize the selling price of your business. Since buyers and banks will value your business based primarily on sales and profits, anything that you can do to boost your earnings in the final few weeks will help offset the impact of the pandemic and increase your bottom line for 2020. Don't underestimate the importance of maximizing the net income on your 2020 tax return and speak with your accountant about your objectives. It is critical that you are both on the same page in trying to make the financials look as attractive as possible. Accountants have a natural tendency to find creative ways to lower income in an effort to reduce taxes, but that may significantly reduce the sale price of your business. Why leave money on the table if 2021 is the year that you cash in your chips and take life a little easier.

Most business buyers and sellers are wondering what 2021 and beyond will bring. The simple fact is that the pandemic has definitely had a major impact on the buying and selling of businesses. This fact is obvious. But diving deeper, there are a range of insights that can be gleaned. In a recent survey of 2,300 business owners by BizBuySell, the internet's most popular business for sale marketplace, 68% of owners felt that they would have received a better price for their business in 2019 than in 2020. Of these owners, 71% said that their assessment was directly tied to the pandemic and its accompanying economic impact.

On the other side of the coin, buyers are acknowledging that the present seems to be a very good time to buy. A staggering 81% of buyers stated that they felt confident that they would be able to find an acceptable price point. In terms of their purchasing timeline, 72% of respondents stated that they were planning on buying a business soon. Survey follow-ups indicated that large numbers of buyers were also planning on buying in 2021.

According to the latest BizBuySell Insight Report, "New data from BizBuySell's small business confidence survey and recent business for sale transactions reflects a market driven by opportunity seekers and business owners either well-positioned to profit or forced to exit."

Aggregate statistics on actual business sale transactions show a steady upward trend in sales since the pandemic hit. In April, transactions showed a 51% year over year decline, shrinking the deficit to 21% in July, and then just 5% fewer deals in September. The catalyst behind the resurgence appears demand driven as buyer confidence reached a record high of 60 compared to 53 a year ago. The Small Business Confidence Index scores sentiment on a range from 0 to 100 using survey responses from over 2,300 small business owners, with 50 representing neutral confidence and 100 representing certainty and an idealized, perfect environment. Of buyers surveyed, 57% believe they can buy a business for a better value than last year. This is a dramatic turn as just 17% believed the same when asked in 2019. Sellers were less optimistic, with owner confidence falling to a low of 45, down from 52 in 2019.

No doubt the largest blow to owner confidence is with businesses that had to shut down entirely during the stay at home orders that many states implemented. With tire and auto centers deemed "essential" businesses, the impact was less severe and the pent-up demand in deferred maintenance is resulting in improved sales over the last several months. Numerous buyer candidates have told me that they are specifically targeting auto service businesses for potential acquisition because they are more likely to hold up better during a pandemic or recession.

Based on the information collected in BizBuySell's study, it is clear that there is a new wave of buyers on the horizon. The report supports the notion that the pandemic has made small business ownership an attractive option for new entrepreneurs. Factors driving new entrepreneurs into the marketplace include everything from being unemployed and wanting more control over their own futures to a desire to capitalize on opportunities.



BizBuySell President Bob House notes that "2021 could be a perfect storm for business sales, as 10,000 Americans will turn 65 each and every day. This means that the supply of excellent businesses entering the marketplace will likely increase dramatically."

Clearly, these are uncertain and emotional times for everyone. There are no easy answers, and many people are struggling and fearful. Some marginal tire and automotive centers may close their doors despite the government's financial incentives. Those closed service bays may help others to survive, just as the old-timers remember from the 2008 recession.

If you are feeling frustrated and overwhelmed by the daily stresses of operating your shop and were considering a transition out of the business in the next 1-3 years, my best suggestion is the sooner the better! There are still plenty of buyers out there looking at business opportunities and banks that are willing to provide 90% financing, so that you can cash out and grow your retirement nest egg.

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For more detailed information on the process of selling your tire and auto service business, or to initiate a no-obligation confidential consultation, call Art directly at 610.722.5636 or visit www.art-blumenthal.com

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Each year, as I write my article for the winter holiday issue of the Road Runner, I try to keep it upbeat and positive. That was certainly more of a challenge this year. The best thing I can say about the year 2020 is that it is almost over. Business has been okay, not great, but we have survived the year so far. We are planning

that the 2021 NETSA Trade Show & Convention will be a go for April 9 and 10, 2021 at Mohegan Sun. We will also be offering NETSA scholarships in 2021, hopefully close to the twenty that we awarded this year. What I have noticed in 2020 is that there have been a lot of people who have stepped up to help others get through this awful pandemic year. In 2021, it looks like we will have a COVID-19 vaccine and start to see somewhat of a return to normalcy, hopefully by the summer. It has been a difficult challenge to many people who have had loved ones get sick or even die from the virus. Contact has been limited with family members in nursing homes and long-term care facilities or with those that live far away. Those on the front lines of health care have been stressed out severely along with their families and friends. Teachers, parents, and business owners have had to make some tough decisions. Yet, we have survived. As Alex Trebek said in his Thanksgiving Day message shortly before his death, "we will persevere". If nothing else, mankind is a resilient bunch, and we tend to adapt to the challenges thrown at us. I find it amazing that these new vaccines have over 90% effectiveness. Science has come a long way since Dr. Jonas Salk and the polio vaccine. Diseases like polio and smallpox decimated the world years ago and science found the answers then as it is finding them now, and yet, it appears that over 40% of the population does not want to get vaccinated against the Coronavirus. Go figure. I was never any good at science in school but even I know that we must have faith in these vaccines. I am sure that there will be some possible side effects but the good here certainly outweighs the bad. Coincidentally, I am having my second dose of the new shingles vaccine today. I had shingles years ago and I can tell you, it was no fun. I could have lost an eye. Valtrex kept it under control. The new vaccine should help prevent me from getting it again for up to five years. I also had my annual flu shot over a month ago. People either like it or hate it. I used to get really sick every winter. Since I have been getting the flu shot, I have sometimes gotten sick during the winter, but the flu was not as severe as it had been when I was not getting the shot. I am hoping that this year a positive side effect from wearing masks and socially distancing will be that the annual flu will not be as severe as it has

been in the past. In addition, all the sanitizing that we are doing should help kill the viruses at home and at our businesses. I am not a big fan of having to sanitize our warehouse every day, but the fact that we have not had a COVID-19 outbreak at Maynard and Lesieur yet, makes me feel like we are doing the right thing. With the Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, and Christmas holidays, I fear that we are on the precipice of a larger virus outbreak. I stayed home alone this year for Thanksgiving and will do the same for Christmas. Our lunch wagon guy Johnny delivered some turkey meat and side dishes to my house this Thanksgiving. Now I know how the older people who cannot get out of the house feel when they get a nice warm meal delivered to their homes! It is a pretty good feeling. I told him not to bother but he does this for quite a few people on Thanksgiving Day and enjoys doing it. He is one of the good people doing positive things that you never hear about. Thank you, Johnny!

I suppose I should mention a little bit of politics, but I will keep it to a minimum. Right to Repair's telematics edition passed overwhelmingly in Massachusetts recently despite extreme scare tactics from the auto manufacturers and dealerships. There was no question that the voters wanted choice and the freedom to bring their cars wherever they want for repair work. Congratulations to all the people involved with getting this key legislation passed. Right to repair 2.0 is now the law of the land in Massachusetts and TIA is pushing hard to have it become national next year! There was also a presidential election recently, and who won depends on your perspective, I guess. Ironically, New Hampshire made large gains for the Republicans who now control the governorship, NH House, and NH Senate, but our Democrat representatives were all reelected to the US Congress. It appears that our state voters chose individuals over parties. We have a Republican governor who has done an excellent job during the pandemic and has balanced the science and politics of covid-19 effectively. He supported President Trump but did not always agree with him. I also voted for the person and not the party, something I have not always done in past elections as a lifelong Republican. I will say this about the election, I am amazed that President Trump did so well, because in my opinion, he has offended just about every category of American at some point these past few years with his tweets. I do not know how the Biden administration is going to do but they sure have a lot of fence mending to do with our allies. He is a decent, respectful person and my hope for the New Year is that he can restore this country to some level of civility and respect that I believe we have lost these past few years.

As we start 2021, my wish to all of you is to have a safe and happy holiday season and that you and your families have a great and Happy New Year!

Larry

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Giving tire quotes over the phone is costing your business money! There's a more effective way to sell your phone shoppers—email them a quote instead. For years, we've been trained on the value of "selling the visit to the store". We've all spent hours in seminars where we learned to quote a customer on "good, better, best" tire

options, and to demonstrate the value in purchasing from your store. All of this is still true. However, the medium in which we should sell these visits has gone digital. Stop quoting your customers on tire prices over the phone. Email them their quotes instead. You're Leaving Money on the Table Let's do some basic math on your phone shoppers. If your shop gets about three tire quote calls per day, that's worth about \$100K per year in revenue to your store, at an average transaction value of \$550 and a close rate of 25%. If your store is good at upselling service and maintenance on each visit, you can assume that the value of your phone shoppers is worth well over \$100K per year to your business. But if you're closing 25% of the customers that call you, what happens with the other 75% of the customers that you didn't sell? How do you stay in touch with the other \$300K of business that you didn't close? Do you call these customers back once a quarter to check in? Do you have a means to stay engaged with these customers? If your store doesn't have software to send nicely-packaged email quotes to your phone shoppers, you're leaving money on the table. TireTutor, and other digital marketing companies for tire dealers, offer software that allows you

to instantly send professional "good, better, best" email quotes to customers on tires and vehicle service. Consider that the lifetime value of a customer is approximately \$2K (over 5 years, without present value discounting of future cash flows). If you were providing quotes to tire shoppers via email, instead of quoting over the phone, you could remarket to these customers (the ones you sold and the ones you didn't sell) via email to capture that \$2K per customer

i. With some basic math, at a 2.62% close rate *ii* on your email campaigns, you're talking approximately \$40K in business, on top of the \$100K of tire quotes you already sold, and each year you generate that additional \$40K of lifetime value plus the \$100K of tire sales on the email quotes. This is how you build a business of expanding repeat customers, and this doesn't even include the revenue lift you'll see from referral business by expanding your customer base. Sending your tire quotes via email gives you a tool to stay in touch with your shoppers—both the ones you will sell today and the ones you might win tomorrow for a different service (brakes, etc.). The software you use at your store should periodically send emails to all the customers you previously emailed a quote to, enabling you to grow your business without lifting a finger. You Can't Improve What You Don't Measure We've all seen it a hundred times. Your new counterperson gets a call from a potential consumer looking for a price on tires. You listen to the call from across the shop. After the call, you ask your new employee if the customer made an appointment. He or she tells you, "They will think about it and give me a call back." Maybe you won that customer. Maybe you lost that customer. Maybe you'll never hear from that customer again. How do you stay engaged with that customer for the next year? How do you measure the close ratio and productivity on these phone calls? The short answer is—you can't. Instead, your salesperson should say, "What's your email address? I'm going to email you a quote on a 'good, better, best' option for your car." Emailing quotes, via software from providers like TireTutor and others, gives you the ability to track which quotes converted to sales, and which ones didn't. This will help you build a smarter business over time. It also ensures that you're standardizing the level of customer service that you're providing to your phone shoppers. Additionally, emailing quotes to your customers gives your employees a "script" and something to speak to with your customers. Your salesperson can email the quote and stay on the phone with the customer, while both your salesperson and your customer review the quotes together—and the sale is closed right there on the phone call. This provides a professional sales opportunity for your business and will WOW your customers! You Need Buy Now E-Commerce Customers are online. Online tire sales are one of the fastest-growing segments of the tire industry, having more than doubled in the past 10 years *iii*. Consumers are increasingly comfortable with buying their tires online. Whatever software you use to digitize your business, this feature should be included. When you send a tire quote to a consumer, the email should be professional. It should be packaged nicely, with the features and benefits of buying from your store. The quote should include a "good, better, best" option. And... maybe most importantly, the quote should allow the consumer to actually pay for the tires and the installation before the customer ever gets to your store. And... I don't mean an "appointment request" button. I mean a full-fledged "Buy Now" with credit card functionality. Don't worry—you can upsell the customer on the brakes their car needs when the car is in your bay. In the meantime, your email quoting functionality should allow you to "lock in" that customer with Buy Now. This way, the customer doesn't go to one of the e-commerce tire sites, buy the tires there instead, and ship them to you for installation.

i <https://www.fool.com/investing/2019/09/12/how-much-do-americans-spend-on-car-repairs.aspx> *ii* <https://mailchimp.com/resources/email-marketing-benchmarks/> *iii* *Modern Tire Dealer.*

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Keeping Costs in Check

By Jeff Mishol, NETSA Member, Danvers, MA; Colonial Life & Benefits

The Road Runner
Winter 2020

As medical costs and deductibles rise, use HCI to help manage expenses.

You can't stop medical costs from increasing, and many government agencies will be forced to raise deductibles in order to keep costs in check. But you can help your employees better manage their increased out-of-pocket expenses.

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Hospital confinement indemnity insurance provides a lump-sum benefit to help offset the costs that aren't covered by most major medical plans. They can help cover costly co-pays, deductibles and other expenses that come your employees' way. With the added financial protection, your employees may be eligible to receive help covering outpatient surgery, diagnostic tests, doctor appointments and emergency room visits.

The plans are available on a group or individual basis. And there are lots of ways to customize the coverage to meet the needs of employees.

Here are some key features and comparison points to keep in mind:

- **Exempt from health care reform.** Most hospital confinement indemnity plans are exempt from the market requirements in health care reform legislation.
- **Flexible underwriting.** These plans are often offered on a guaranteed-issue basis and waive pre-existing conditions when participation requirements are met.
- **Higher benefit levels.** Look for benefit levels that stay in line with health care costs nationwide and with increasing deductibles and out-of-pocket expenses.
- **Employer- or employee-paid.** You can pay all or part of the premiums or allow employees to pay them.
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Plans may vary on the state level, please reach out with any questions. For more information please reach out to Jeff Mishol at 781.799.4598



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Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to all.

NETSA's 2019 Scholarship Golf Tournament

– Normally this is where Jim Melvin Jr. and I would talk about another successful Golf Tournament. We would feature pictures of the participants enjoying themselves

on a sunny day at Shining Rock Golf Club. Well, 2020 put that ball well out of bounds and we had to take a big penalty stroke for 2020. The cancelation of the Tournament could have been another big financial hit, however because of the generosity of some of our board members we were able to raise \$11,525 in donations. Our goal is to raise \$20,000 for our 2021 scholarships. We have another generous offer from a Board Member who is ready to match any further donations we receive by January 31, 2021 up to \$5000. If you want to donate, please call me at 855-638-7248 for more information. All amounts will be greatly appreciated.

The **Trade Show Committee** – Chaired by Rich Tuttle, is hard at work on the 2021 NETSA Trade Show & Convention. We are working diligently with Mohegan Sun to ensure a safe, socially distanced event that will still provide an informative and exciting experience for all our attendees. This year's event is slated for Mohegan Sun on April 9th and 10th, 2021. We will have more information after the first of the year.

The **Membership Committee** – Chaired by Dale Franklin is looking for help with our 2021 membership efforts. He is asking that our existing members recruit just one business to join our organization in 2021. NETSA's continued strength relies upon the ongoing membership support of businesses like yours and is more important than ever before because of the setbacks we experienced in 2020. That support has allowed us to:

- Support the Right to Repair effort in 2020.
- Provide up to twenty \$2,000 scholarships yearly.
- Monitor industry related legislation throughout New England.
- Represent our members at the TIA Lobby Day in Washington, D.C.

- Publish four issues of the Road Runner News Letter yearly.
- Produce our annual Trade Show and Convention, as well as our annual Scholarship Golf Tournament.
- Furnish a host of benefits for our members.

The **Scholarship Committee** – Chaired by Larry Lesieur will be asking the Board to approve up to 20 scholarships for 2021. Look for details and applications at the end of January. Applications must be submitted by April 15th to be considered for a 2021 scholarship. Larry also wanted to thank all our 2020 sponsors for keeping their commitments in a challenging year.

The **Legislative Committee** – reports that the Massachusetts Right to Repair Initiative to expand access to vehicular data, won big in the 2020 election, getting the majority of votes in just about every city and town in Massachusetts. NETSA was happy to support this effort and wants to thank Tommy Hickey and the Mass Right to Repair team for all their efforts to make this initiative a success at the ballot box.

As we end this year there is ample cause for optimism and hope. While our hearts and prayers go out to all who have suffered and lost family or friends because of the Coronavirus, it is certainly exciting that we will have a vaccine that is being distributed as you are reading this. Operation Warp Speed implemented by the Trump Administration is a great example of the resilience, innovation and cooperation that makes the USA great. Our own example of the generosity of our members to ensure that NETSA will be able to fund the 2021 Scholarships is just one example of the many acts of kindness and support displayed by so many people across this country. Please join me in wishing everyone a happy and prosperous New Year.

Tony DeSimone

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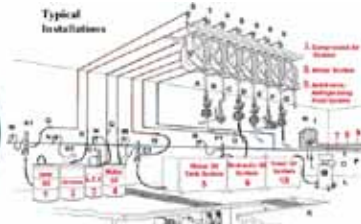


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OR SHOULD WE JUST KEEP
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2020.... Can you relate?



I'm not talking to myself.



I'm having a
parent/teacher
conference.



ME IN 2019: If I could just have like a week with nothing to do and nowhere to go I could finally get this house clean and organized.

ME NOW: Nope, that wasn't the problem . . .



@saltymamas

If I'm locked down again, I might actually be willing to chat with someone about my car's extended warranty.

Don't Forget to reach out to a fellow NETSA member today... 2020 has been difficult for all. Wish them a safe Holiday Season!

After six months of listening to people talk with masks on I finally understand what Charlie Brown's teacher was saying 🤔



The reason that digital advertising is so important is that search engines are where almost every customer buying journey begins. Every day

Google gets 3.5-billion searches, Bing gets nearly 875-million, and Yahoo gets another 585-million search queries. That equates to a combined total of almost 5-billion daily searches. Yet despite the volume, the oldest joke in digital marketing is "The best place to hide a dead body is on the second page of Google" because 60% of traffic goes to the top three listings and less than 10% of all searchers will ever go to the second page.

Research has also shown that if a user cannot find what they are looking for on the very top of the first page of search results they will enter a new, different set of search terms rather than drill down into the initial results. Most importantly, 97% of online users perform a search to find local businesses like yours.

Paid digital advertising is a marketing method where companies pay a "publisher" - such as a search engine provider or website owner or a social media platform - each time someone views or clicks on one of their ads. Essentially, companies use the paid ads or keywords to "buy" visits to their site rather than earning them organically over time. Different companies will bid for the ad space or a specific keyword in a search, the publisher accepts the highest bid, and then places the ad at the top of the page where it has maximum visibility and the greatest chance of being clicked on. Enough click-throughs and the resulting jump in traffic will help turn the purchaser's website into a highly ranked destination by Google and the other big search engines. At the end of the day, it's a basic equation: Spend enough, place a solid ad, and you will get top placement on page one in a search.

That's why you need to have a clear paid advertising strategy for your business and a solid approach is to develop one that covers the big three pillars of online ads: Search, social, and display. Although they are all similar in some ways, they all have different advantages and can reach different audiences, so let's break them down.

SEARCH ADVERTISING BASICS: SEO, SEM, AND DISPLAY ADS

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) "organically" increases your platform visibility on search engines such as Google or Yahoo and drives more traffic to your dealership's website. Organic (non-paid) search results are ranked by the quality and content of the web page and make up most of the content you see after a search. To rank at the top of this section, your landing page needs to be relevant for the searcher and needs to have a high click-through rate. SEO makes up around one-third of all traffic to company websites and accounts for more traffic than paid and social put together, but it takes time and expertise to build. Successful SEO requires extensive knowledge of how search engines work and takes time and practice to get right because it is a moving target. For example, search engine algorithms on Google alone are updated as many as 500 to 600 times a year and requires constant monitoring and modifications to be effective.

To accelerate the ability for your business to be quickly found in web searching, you'll need to use paid Search Engine Marketing (SEM). SEM is used to describe online searches that begin by clicking through on a paid ad.

Some of the most common terms used to define to SEM activities include:

- **Paid Search Advertising:** Short, text-based ads that are placed on search engines like Google, Yahoo, Bing, and appear at the top right-hand side of the page when search results are displayed
- **Pay-Per-Click (PPC):** The pricing model for what you will pay if someone clicks on your ad and goes to your website or landing page. These ads appear in the top search engine slots and direct searchers directly to the page you want them to land on
- **Cost-Per-Click (CPC):** The fee you pay when a user clicks on your ad to visit your website or landing page
- **Cost-Per-Thousand Impressions (CPM):** Most search ads are sold on a CPC / PPC basis, but some advertising options may also be sold on a CPM basis
- **Display Ads:** A step up from standard PPC text-based ads, this approach uses either static or dynamic images (e.g. banners, videos, audio, or polling formats) that offer a more engaging experience that helps capture the attention of your target audience and drive conversion

SEM effectively turbocharges your online marketing because paid search ads drive traffic directly to your website or straight to your service and inventory pages. The most common form of this is the Pay-Per-Click (PPC) model. On one level, paid search ads are simple. If you are a tire dealer and a big winter storm is forecast for your area, you absolutely want to advertise your inventory on Google. When someone searches for keywords you bid on, like "studded tires" or "best winter tire," their search term will trigger your text ad. Your ad will show up in the sponsored section of the search results at the top of the page just to the right of all the organic entries.

You can also use PPC to target searchers based on their geography with search ads, so it's only shown to people in your local area. It's a great way to compete in your industry and target local audiences and people who are already looking for your services. This is a cost-effective approach to getting visibility quickly and may not be as expensive as you'd think. A recent review of Google AdWords pricing shows that the minimum bid per keyword is only 5-cents, while the most expensive keywords (like "insurance" or "loans") can range up to \$670 per click!

Beyond text ads, you can also use PPC strategies with "Display" ads. Display advertising is a way to grow your brand's awareness online and are targeted based on user activity. Display ads (often banner ads or "rich media" formats like video or audio) are shown to your target audience when they are browsing the Internet. With a 90% reach across all Internet users worldwide, Google's display network is the largest in the world and reaches more than 2-million sites and more than 650,000 mobile apps.

Effective display formats include:

- **Static Banner Ads:** A banner is a simple image ad that is served onto a web page. Static banner ads typically consist of a single image file with no audio, video or additional features

- **Animated Ads:** Animated ads are a cut above static banner ads when it comes to capturing the attention of the target audience. Animation creates movement that naturally catches the eye and works against what is known as "banner blindness," prompting target audiences to investigate your message

- **Video Ads:** While video ads are primarily served through video content platforms like Netflix and YouTube, they can also be distributed through display ad networks like Google. The great thing about video advertising today is that almost everybody has access to a mobile phone with reasonably high-quality video capabilities and consumers love them!

Display ads are powerful tools, but require advanced audience targeting and the creative ability to build a dynamic web-based ad. To maximize your dealership's success online, you need to develop a strategy that blends both PPC and Display formats

FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM MARKETING

Facebook has a huge audience - a staggering 2.4 billion people use it every month! But beyond keeping connected with friends and family, people are increasingly using Facebook to connect with businesses of all sizes. The company recently reported that two-thirds of its users say they visit a local business's Facebook Page at least once a week. Potential customers are already looking for businesses like your dealership on Facebook and having a clear, focused Facebook marketing strategy is the only way to tap into this existing audience.

Here are six ways you can significantly boost your dealership's advertising reach through Facebook:

- **News Feed Ads:** Cost-effective ads that target unique audiences and can track traffic and conversion on your website
- **Conversion Ads:** Target and deliver certain actions such as "Request a demo" or "Take a test drive"
- **Carousel Ads:** Feature several rotating images in a single ad to display different models and feature packages
- **Engagement Ads:** Best used to drive "likes" and comments on your ads, increasing validation and visibility
- **Lead Generation Ads:** Allow users to fill out lead forms on their own Facebook wall without going to your website
- **Remarketing Ads:** Connect your website inventory feed to Facebook, then advertise to past visitors with ads customized to highlight the products and services they viewed

Facebook's high traffic flow and wide range of ad mediums offer several ways to enhance your brand. It also allows you to promote products and services through social experiences that can drive loyalty and help create the most powerful type of marketing - word of mouth referrals.

Although Instagram is owned by Facebook, it's a network of younger users. According to recent studies, more than half of the global Instagram user population is younger than 34 years old. There's a nearly even split between

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the genders with 51% female and 49% male users. Since this younger population is less likely to have a long-term relationship with a tire dealer or repair shop in place, Instagram is a potent tool for dealers seeking to attract new customers. With its easy-to-use visual interface, it's also a great way to build your brand because Instagram puts a "face" on your dealership that encourages trust and engagement among potential customers. Having an Instagram account signals that your business is reputable, real, and transparent to this audience.

Instagram currently offers business users three formats for advertising:

- **Photo ads:** These look like regular photo posts, but they have a "Sponsored" label above the photo. They also have a "Learn More" button in the bottom right corner under the photo.
- **Video ads:** Like the photo ads, these look like regular video posts, but with a "Sponsored" label on top.
- **Carousel ads:** These ads look identical to photo ads but feature multiple photos that users can swipe through.

You can promote your posts with ad dollars while also gaining access to key analytics on their performance. Advertising on Instagram absolutely makes sense because Instagram often has up to 10-times the engagement of Facebook, so you are likely to get far better results from your ads. Since Instagram uses the same Ad Manager platform as Facebook, it has all of the same great tracking capabilities that Facebook offers. That means you can create a post about a new product or special promotion and see everything from link clicks, to leads to conversions and the cost-per-result on any campaign you run. In addition, you can also break down the results you receive to see who or where they came from (i.e. gender, age range, location, device type, etc.).

THE BEST OPTION FOR YOUR BUSINESS

As you can see, there are a lot of different choices when it comes to developing an effective online strategy for your dealership. The truth is all of these tactics work, but it's also important to evaluate the success of each before continuing to invest your dollars in a particular bucket.

No matter what advertising mix you try, some of the key metrics you'll want to watch include:

- **Clicks:** Every conversion starts with a click, and the higher number of clicks are an early indicator of PPC success
- **Click-Through-Rate (CTR):** CTR is measured by dividing the total number of clicks your campaign got in the month (or period being reported) by its total impressions. This equation tells you that out of 1,000 impressions, your ad was clicked 100 times and your CTR is 10% percent for example. Knowing what CTR is and how to measure it is key to being able to indicate your performance.

- **Cost-Per-Click (CPC):** CPC measures exactly how much an advertiser has paid. You can measure CPC by dividing the total cost of a campaign by the number of times the ad was clicked in that campaign.
- **Conversion Rate (CVR):** You can measure conversion rate by dividing the number of conversions the campaign received by the total clicks. Since conversion rate is expressed as a percentage, if the campaign had 100 clicks and 10 conversions, 10/100 means that the conversion rate would be 10 percent. Beyond being a key indicator of a successful campaign, CVR is the main reason why most businesses hire an outside PPC marketing firm!

Based on these and other metrics, you may want to start small across multiple channels to test the waters and then invest in the two or three strategies that are delivering the best results. But to have a strong paid advertising strategy, you need to have a strong understanding of your target audience. Where do they "live" online? What do they care about? What are they searching for, what kind of language do they use, and what do they buy? Remember that young customer who was searching for those studded tires? He or she may have clicked on your Instagram ad at the beginning of winter and might not make a purchase immediately, but your company made an impression. That means your brand stands a better chance of being remembered when they begin searching for local tire shops a few weeks later and your PPC ad pops up at the top of the page and they click through.

Understanding your target market, how they behave, and then measuring how they react to your content is key to the success of all your campaigns!

This article was created by the team at Net Driven. Learn more about Net Driven digital marketing solutions by visiting www.netdriven.com.



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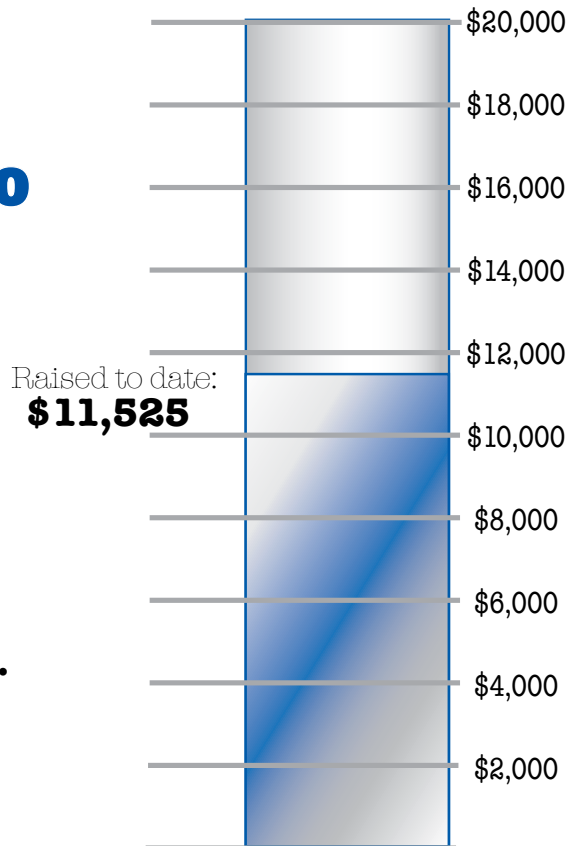
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Things have Changed...

Rich Tuttle, Tradeshow Chairman, VP NETSA

The Road Runner
Winter 2020



2020 has been a tough year for all of us. We have had to change the way we live our lives personally and professionally. For me, after over 30 years of being on the road seeing customers, I had to work from home. Yes, I was happy to be working when so many people were not, but I totally had to change the way I did

my job. As of today, I am now on the road delivering tires. I guess I will do anything to get out of the house.

NETSA has had to change as well. We had to cancel our Trade Show and golf event. Our Board of Directors and Annual Meeting were done via Zoom, and will continue that way at least to start the year.

In late July I had enough with all the changes in my life. I had to do something that was somewhat normal. Myself, and my wife Betsy took two weeks off and went to Tennessee to visit our two granddaughters. While there we took all the precautions to be safe. We wore our masks, we practiced social distancing, we washed our hands every chance we had. While there, we visited the Atlanta Zoo and Aquarium. We visited the Smoky Mountains and took in a dinner show. In late September we took another two weeks and went to Disney World in Florida. We also went to Sea World and the Tampa Zoo. While there we took all the same precautions to be safe.

Now I do not have a death wish or live my life on the wild side. I do take Covid-19 very seriously. I visited these venues because I wanted to know if people were actually attending and how these companies were able to open safely. I have been to some of these places before and wanted to see

what had changed. Well, a lot has changed. Each place had very strict rules and procedures in place that had to be followed at all times. These strict rules and procedures made it safe for all and it was still fun to go. Yes, it was different. Yes, things had changed. There were things you could not do because of safety; regardless, Betsy and I had a great time. Just getting back to somewhat of a normal life meant a lot. Each of these venues worked with local, state, and federal authorities to open safely. Each venue came up with unique and inventive ways of doing business. Wearing masks, social distancing, one-way traffic and so much more. At no time during our visit did we feel unsafe. In fact, it was reassuring how much they did to make it a safe experience. For example, at the time we visited Disney World, they had no reported Covid-19 cases at the park from visitors or employees after reopening.

With all that said, we are still planning the 2021 NETSA Tradeshow & Convention April 9th and 10th 2021 at Mohegan Sun. Tony DeSimone and I have been working with Mohegan Sun to ensure we will follow all local, state, and federal rules to have a safe, fun filled, and informative Trade Show. Our format will be the same as always, Annual Meeting & Luncheon featuring our Keynote Speaker, training seminars, and our Hall of Fame Dinner. However, some things may look a lot different. We will have strict rules and procedures in place that will have to be followed at all times. These rules and procedures will make it safe for all and still allow the show to be informative and enjoyable for all to participate. We all had to change the way we work and play this year. It is who we are. We adapt to what needs to be done. I believe we will have a safe, informative, and great Trade Show. It won't be easy, but it never is. We all need to learn from the past but look to the future. We will keep you informed of our progress

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GfK's panel of independent US tire retailers is providing a directional signal at a time of extreme uncertainty. Through our weekly Leader Panel, and our larger "panel of record," we are showing that 2020 unit volume and dollar sales are generally 3% to 8% behind 2019 -- remarkable for a year when so many have lost their jobs and/or stopped traveling to work. GfK's Consumer Pulse nationwide surveys continue to affirm that people are relying on their cars for almost all travel -- shopping, vacations, and more. As the industry continues to gear up for 2021, we will be providing this essential benchmark data to enable truly data-driven decisions. -- Neil Portnoy, GfK

Key Findings from October 2020:

| Segment | Monthly: Unit share change vs. year ago | Monthly: Units % change vs. year ago | Monthly: Dollars % change vs. year ago | Year-To-Date: Units % change vs. year ago | Year-To-Date: Dollars % change vs. year ago |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| TOTAL TIRES | | -2.4 | -2.0 | -7.8 | -6.8 |
| Non-Light Truck* | -0.4 | -2.9 | -3.6 | -8.5 | -8.5 |
| Light Truck | 0.4 | -0.3 | 2.9 | -4.6 | -1.4 |
| 18"+ RD | 1.6 | 2.9 | 1.3 | -2.2 | -2.8 |
| Non-Light Truck* | 0.8 | 0.7 | -2.4 | -4.1 | -5.9 |
| Light Truck | 0.8 | 15.0 | 15.8 | 9.6 | 10.4 |
| UHP Speeds | -0.4 | -7.6 | -14.8 | -12.0 | -14.2 |
| Run Flats | -0.1 | -6.8 | -8.0 | -19.7 | -19.3 |

*Non-LT tires includes P-Metric, Euro-Metric, and Hard-Metric tires

- Our monthly sales data continue to rebound towards pre-COVID-19 levels.
- Year-to-date, however, we are ~7% behind last year's pace (in both units and dollars).
- Tires used on "essential" vehicles, like LT 18"+ delivery trucks and construction pickups, continue to outperform the overall market.
- Discretionary items, like non-LT 18"+ RD (regular passenger car) tires, are recovering.
- Specialty tires, like Run-flats or Ultra High Performance tires, are down.
- Our weekly COVID-19 leader panel has demonstrated, for the past several weeks, that 2020 sales trends have been very similar to 2019.



Hello. This is Wayne Rivers at The Family Business Institute. As always, thanks for tuning in. Don't forget about our Boot Camp class Echo, February 18, 2021, for your high-potential rising leaders in your companies. Great opportunity to get them some education on the business of the construction business. We can't teach them how to estimate and project manage and file claims and all that kind of stuff, what we can teach

them is construction business finance and business development and leadership and strategic planning and things like that, the things that it takes to run a construction company at the 30,000-foot level. That's what Boot Camp is all about.

All right. This week, I want to talk about thinking before you respond. This actually comes from one of our facilitators, John Stump, who is just a gifted consultant. We're so blessed to have him. Now, why is this important? Why do I even bring this up? I mean, think before you respond, that sounds so elementary. Well, we have countless opportunities every day, week, month to interact with other people, and those interactions can either be neutral or they can be a difference maker on the positive side, or they can be a difference maker on the negative side. Personally speaking, all too many times I may be caught up in a moment, not paying attention, not being engaged with people and behave in an irritated way or something. What John Stump saw, he was going to a client's site and he was at the airport to come home. An Air Force officer was in the line and he very politely walked up to a lady and said, "Are you in line?" He didn't want to break in the line. She rounded on him, and then with an incredulous look on her face, "I'm not blocking you. Why are you asking me?" She just flew hot for no real reason. The Air Force officer, to his credit, said, "Thank you," and he moved on and got in his place in line. Well, John observed that and just thought, that situation, the Air Force officer was really polite. That could have been just a really nice, warm moment of human courtesy and it turned into an ugly exchange, witnessed by lots of people. You think about how many times that happens. That's happened to me, it's happened to you, think about that.

Dennis and I took some training about 20 years ago from a psychotherapist named Jean McLendon, who's terrific. She talked about the ingredients in any communication, any human interaction, there are five particular ingredients. There's the message, the message we receive through our five senses.

We heard, "Are you in line?" We hear that, but we also see body language and other things. We observe things through our five senses and then it goes into our brain. By the way, all of this happens in nanoseconds. Our brains are amazing computers, all this happens in a split second. There's the message, there is the meaning that we derive

from the message, what we hear, but also, it's filtered through our memories and our view of who we are as people. Then our feelings come up about the message. Sometimes they're neutral, sometimes you may feel angry, sometimes you may feel happy at whatever message you receive. Then Jean had this incredible insight. After we have a feeling about that meaning, then we have feelings about our feelings. "Oh, I shouldn't feel that way." It really is an amazing insight. That piece of it, the feelings about our feelings, is where we get caught up in our own psychological drama. But if we know it's there, then we can adapt and react in a positive way.

Then finally, the fifth ingredient is your response. The response is what other people see. When the lady became angry and flew hot, that's what other people saw, but there was a message, there was a meaning, there was a feeling, there was a feeling about a feeling, and finally, what the Air Force officer got was the response.

Now, Stephen Covey says it, Jean McLendon says it. We have a choice, and it really is a choice. The way Stephen Covey says it is exercise integrity in the moment of choice. That moment of choice is not a moment, it's a split second. It's a tiny little second. That's what John Stump recommends, think before you respond. That's when you have a choice that you can make about how you're going to respond. This Air Force officer exercised integrity, and he remained calm and polite and took what could have been a negative interaction and just erased it. He exercised integrity in the moment of choice.



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Customer Service RX for Covid-19

By Nancy Friedman, Keynote Speaker; Customer Service Expert; President, Telephone Doctor Customer Service Training

The Road Runner
Winter 2020



How do we do customer service in this 'new normal' - virtually? Well, what did you do before?

It's the same, but a bit more of it. Customers expect great service 24/7/365. Always have. Let's not let COVID be that excuse. Yes, many companies are understaffed; however, that's happened before. Many companies are struggling. And that's happened before. Many

companies have had to hire new folks to replace the ones that left. And that too has happened before.

It's not fun, it's not fair and it's not right.

But if you're going to stay in this fight, and most of us will and want to, we need to UP the service angle. We cannot let this virus cripple us. It's done enough damage. If you're lucky enough to be declared 'essential' and if you're lucky enough to be open and still serving customers, do more than you used to. Have your staff do more than they used to. These 5 criteria will help. Sit your staff down and 'talk' with them. Have them understand, customer service isn't a choice, never has been, and it's more important during these times than ever before. How can they help? Get some of their thoughts. Here are ours:

1. Start some sort of training NOW. Next week could be too late. If you have some customer service training in place, step it up. If you don't, start something to help your staff go above and beyond. It's too easy in today's marketplace to go somewhere else than stick around with surly help. Even the old, "Thank you for shopping with us," "We appreciate your business," and "Have a wonderful day" go a long way and costs nothing.
2. Meet with your staff at the end of the day. What went wrong? What went right? Capture the 'right.'
3. Have your staff put on a mental suit of armor. Let the verbal projectiles bounce off them. Most of the customers are not upset with 'them.' They usually are the target, sadly. Talk about that. Let the staff know you are aware there are some 'not so fun customers' out there. The bulk of them are simply trying to buy a gift for someone they love or have a nice dinner out.
4. Your employees need to have the CARE GENE. That's critical. "Customers don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care." Sitting and reading a book, doing your nails, or talking with a coworker when a customer walks into

the store is not good news. Jump up, walk over, SMILE and say hello. We need to be different, special, during this unusual time.

5. And most important of all: SMILE. Have smile lessons if you must. Don't let your staff enter the floor without a smile. Telephone Doctor says: "A phony smile is better than a real frown." It's not about you; it's about the 'customer.' And no matter what time of year, a smile will win folks over.

Any one of these ANTI-COVID tips will be of value and help. All 5 can make a huge difference. You CAN make it happen. Better to go to shorter hours than less customer service.

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Nancy Friedman, Founder and Chairman of Telephone Doctor Customer Service Training, is a popular keynote customer service speaker at franchise, corporate meetings, and conferences around the country.

Visit: www.nancyfriedman.com; email or call her: nancyf@telephonedoctor.com, 314-276-1012, in St. Louis, MO, central time.

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Should I Go to the Dentist During COVID-19

By Charlie Muise, NEAD

The Road Runner
Winter 2020

Have you put off going to the dentist because of the pandemic? Many people know they need to see the dentist, but they are worried about their health and safety. So if you are wondering, "Should I go to the dentist during COVID-19?" here are four things to know.

1. Essential for health

People need to see the dentist at least once a year to keep their teeth and gums healthy. Research shows that if you do not take care of your teeth and gums, you could be at higher risk for developing serious medical problems. For example, putting off taking care of a tooth with decay can lead to gum disease. The bacteria in the gum infection can get into the blood stream and cause many other health conditions. These include cardiovascular disease, stroke, diabetes, kidney problems and respiratory issues. It can even cause problems during pregnancy. Taking care of your oral health is essential so, yes; you should go to the dentist during COVID-19. Dental offices are following stringent protocols to keep patients safe. There's more about safety precautions below.

2. Dental emergencies

During COVID-19, many people put off seeing the dentist until they experienced tooth or gum pain. Oral health problems left untreated can become a dental emergency requiring immediate attention. During the pandemic, dentists have noticed an increase in dental emergencies. Many people are working remotely or

quarantining at home. To lift their spirits, they are eating comfort foods. Many of these foods contain sugars and carbohydrates that can combine with harmful oral bacteria to attack tooth enamel and cause decay.

You should keep your teeth and gums healthy by brushing twice and flossing once daily to remove food particles and bacteria. Practicing good oral hygiene can prevent serious oral problems that could require emergency dental care.

Learn more about how the healthiness of your mouth could be an indicator of your overall wellness.



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3. Safety precautions

Across the country, dental offices are following safety guidelines outlined by their state health departments. In addition, they are practicing disinfecting and cleaning procedures as directed by the American Dental Association. Before scheduling a dental appointment, you should contact your dentist's office, and also find out about the COVID-19 statistics in your state and county. During appointments, dental professionals wear protective gear from head to toe, such as caps, masks, face shields, gloves, gowns and shoe covers. They clean dental chairs and equipment, and disinfect all tools after each patient visit.

You will need to wear a mask as well when entering the building. Waiting rooms are set up for social distancing. Or, the dentist may ask you to call from your car when you arrive. Before the appointment, office staff will screen you for COVID-19 symptoms and take your temperature to ensure they are meeting pandemic health guidelines.

Yes, it is possible to go to the dentist during COVID-19. Contact your dentist to find out how the office is keeping patients and dental team members safe.

4. Teledentistry chats

During teledentistry appointments, you can video chat directly with your dentist about oral health concerns. This means you

can see your dentist during COVID-19 without an in-person appointment. Then if an office visit is necessary, you can discuss the safety and timing of your appointment. If you're having oral discomfort and are concerned about going to see the dentist, contact your dentist's office to set up a teledentistry appointment. You will need a smartphone or computer with internet access. The office staff will provide a secure link for the video chat and explain how to connect with a dental team member.

A photograph of a mechanic in blue overalls and white gloves carrying a large tire. The background shows a workshop setting with a car on a lift.

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Ben Moore (218) 213-2251

- Creation, Manage & Maintenance of: Facebook, Twitter, Google, Yelp & You Tube with a dedicated account manager

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Tire Industry Market Facts

GfK Benchmarking:

Neil Portnoy (212) 884-9269

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