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## Mail Room - We'd love to hear from You!



## Right to Repair Needs your Help

Tony DeSimone, NETSA Executive Director - submitted on behalf of RTR

RIGHT TO REPAIR NEEDS YOUR HELP We need your help to get 20,000 signatures to ensure that the Right to Repair is placed on the ballot in November Usually, we would reach out directly through gatherings, public places, and knocking on doors - but because of social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic, this is not possible so we are asking for your electronic signature.

**If we don't act quickly, independent repair shops and parts stores will lose crucial wireless information, not covered under the 2012 Right to Repair law, that they need to continue to serve their customers. This means consumers will increasingly lose their car repair choice we fought for in 2012 - we can't let that happen.**

Please go to: <https://www.righttorepairpetition.org/> and enter your information including your signature and home address.

We don't have much time and we really can't do this without your help.

**With your help, we passed Right To Repair in 2012 at 86% and we can do it again. Please pass this along to all eligible Massachusetts voters!**

I hope you, your family, and your community are safe during these challenging times. Stay strong, we will get through this. Again the link to sign is: <https://www.righttorepairpetition.org/>



A hearty hello to my fellow NETSA members! I am Blaise Pascale, your new President. I would like to thank the membership for your support in these uncertain times. Without the support of the members, our organization would not be able to continue to grow and prosper.

for a rainy day, we are still going to be able to fund our twenty \$2,000 scholarships this year. Amazingly, none of the scholarship co-sponsors withdrew their support!

In view of this, we ask you to please support our upcoming Golf Tournament...even if you are not a golfer. You can still enjoy a day out on the links or sitting on a terrace. NETSA will be hosting our Benefit Scholarship Auction, ordinarily held at the Hall of Fame Dinner following the Trade Show. Details will be forthcoming in the Road Runner and on the website.

I don't want to dwell on the downturn in business...but as many of you have had to cut back because of economic conditions, just think about how that same situation effects college students and their financial needs. Now, more than ever, our commitment to the NETSA Scholarship Program is crucial to those students. I hope that we can count on your support. Remember...NETSA gives more awards to more students than any other program. We have a reputation that is nationwide as the premier Regional Trade Organization in the country. Next year, we will do everything within our power to make up for cancelling this year's show and prove that NETSA is still the best.


Thank you for your continued support, *Blaise*

I would also like to thank Glenn Wilder for his service as President, and kudos to Rich Tuttle for stepping in for Matt Lewis as Treasurer. Matt found he just didn't have the time to devote to the job due to increased responsibilities with his employer. I'd also like to thank Frank Pascale for taking over as the new Treasurer. And of course, a shout out to Matt Lewis, for his many years of faithful and excellent service on the Board.

These are difficult times certainly, unlike anything that NETSA has faced before. It is important therefore for us to remember to think outside the Box, and outside of traditional Tire Dealers and Tire Suppliers when it comes to new members. I would like to see invitations going to Trade Schools, Auto Body Shops, Auto Dealers, Parts Suppliers...anyone that we have a business relationship with...that would be interested. Together, we can come up with options to grow and expand the organization despite the effects of the Pandemic and the Economy.

The cancellation of the Trade Show puts a significant financial burden on the NETSA Treasury. However, due to our past administration's planning





**NEW ENGLAND TIRE & SERVICE ASSOCIATION**

*The Roadrunner is a publication of New England Tire & Service Association. The Road Runner is published 4 times a year as a source of information for NETSA Members and supporters. NETSA directors, staff and members do not necessarily agree with all the contents or opinions appearing in this publication nor should its readers rely on any of the Road Runner content for support of any legal position. On matters involving legal interpretation, the reader is advised and encouraged to relay solely upon the advice of his or her own hired legal council. The road Runner invites and encourages comments from its readers.*

## Welcome New Members

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## PRODUCTS



## PROGRAMS





If you serve B2C customers in any retail establishment, the everyday consumer controls a large part of your destiny. As an automotive and tire shop manager, you only see most of your customers when they have a problem, which means they may already associate negative feelings with your business. There are several stigmas at play related to auto services like

high ticket prices, wasting time in a shop waiting room, sketchy service advisors, and inadequate procedures.

Who you hire makes a difference when it comes to changing your customers' feelings about having maintenance done at your shop. Having the right people in place to provide an experience that aligns with the expectations of today's customers will largely affect your shop's ability to flourish.

As a specialist in industrial recruiting, I can say that the first step toward making good hires is understanding the trends, demands, and technology in our field. With this information, it's easier to decide what kinds of skills to look out for in automotive shop hiring.

## The Shop of the Future

In the tire and automotive industries, we mirror prominent trends across all markets in the US economy retail sector. Brand loyalty continues to diminish, and the best way to earn a customer is to provide value, speed, and convenience.

Traditional service businesses like tire and auto shops that want to be competitive need to have an online presence so their customers can take advantage of promotions, order and receive service, buy parts and more while on the go. Investing in technology and training for employees to handle back-end order processing applications, social media, and other related tools is a must.

Here is where the question arises: In a shop environment, what kind of employee can meet the customers' needs and work through all of the technology you now have in place?

## Hard And Soft Skills Are Equally As Important

Most automotive shop hiring consists of customer-facing employees. These are your crucial front-line team members that should embody your brand's positive image. Whether they are sales counter personnel, service advisors, inside sales, or mechanics, you should look for six key attributes when hiring employees for your shop:

1. **Adaptability**
2. **Teachability**
3. **Computer Skills**

4. **Technical Skills**
5. **Communication**
6. **The Golden Rule**

Let's get into specifics on each of these now.

**1. Adaptability** - In most businesses today, employees are faced with having to learn and regularly manage their tasks using five to seven, or more, different computer applications. These applications are often updated or, in some cases, become obsolete and need to be replaced with new ones. Because of this, workers frequently have to learn how to do things a new way, which can be disruptive to the flow of productivity. Your employees' ability to adapt to change, whether it's related to technology or other aspects of operations, can make or break your workflow. For this reason, I believe that adaptability is the number one quality any automotive leader should look for when hiring shop employees.

**2. Teachability** - If you are looking for someone that will help your shop to flourish, you should look for a person that enjoys learning. In the automotive and tire business, the variations of new developments and products are never ending. If your employee naturally likes to learn about new things, you and your customers will benefit from their ability to stay informed on product, process, and industrial enhancements as a whole.

**3. Technical Skills** - Depending on the position you're hiring for, you may need a higher or lower level of technical expertise. For mechanics or installers, you may want to conduct an on-the-spot "Show Me" test during interviews. You can have your interviewee take on a few simple tasks or exercises by demonstrating on training equipment. These tests will allow you to observe their actual skill level and demeanor while troubleshooting. If you're hiring employees with little work history in the field, you can ask them about related personal experiences. Did they grow up helping a relative work on a project car every weekend, or are they a self-proclaimed gearhead? These are just examples, but verifiable experience or interest in cars, trucks, and vehicles will be of benefit to you.

**4. Communication** - Do they have a friendly speaking tone and demeanor? Do they speak up in a positive way if they don't agree with something that's being done? Do they listen to ideas put forth by others? I'm not saying they need to be an expert in public speaking or negotiation. But you want to see that your prospective employee has the interpersonal skills to get along with your customers and the shop team.

**5. Computer Skills** - As mentioned earlier, your shop employees will need to use the tools you have in place for online and mobile applications. Luckily, computers are a daily part of life now, and many computer-based business tools are user-friendly. They can quickly be learned by someone who uses computers in their personal life, even for things like gaming, interacting on social platforms, and online banking, e.g. Be flexible, because if you only want to hire people who have worked in the specific systems you use, your pool of available talent will be a lot smaller, and that can significantly drag out your time to fill an empty position.

**6. Follows "The Golden Rule"** - In an environment where safety comes first (even before technology), you want to hire employees that are considerate of others. Indifference for others puts everyone at your shop, and your customers, at risk. Hire employees that care about their well-being and that of others. This way, your shop will earn the reputation of being both careful and honest.

**Sharing Best Practices**

In our industry, staffing a shop with great employees is one of the most challenging things a retail manager dreams of achieving. Sometimes it's hard enough to find one good employee, let alone stack a full team of superstars. To avoid being understaffed, it's vital to leverage your relationships with existing employees and other people in your network.

Ask them to bring in people they know. You can even implement an employee referral program as an incentive, but you'll often find that if you ask, people are simply happy to help each other out.

Another key to automotive shop hiring is to network with fellow service center owners or managers in our industry. They may have an overflow of resumes, or have that one candidate they'd love to hire but can't because they're already at capacity.

How have you been able to find employees that have done well in advanced automotive and tire service facilities? I'd love to hear from you, what's worked, and what hasn't. Let's get the conversation started.

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### 2021 Is Going to Be a Very Tough Year to Sell a Business

For tire and auto service shop owners who have been negatively impacted by COVID-19 and are considering a transition out of the business in the next 1-3 years, the sooner the better!

I predict that 2021 is going to be a very tough year to sell a business, especially if it takes a while for shops to get back to pre-COVID-19 monthly sales and profit levels.

I worry that valuations will tank in 2021 for many high-profit shops that finish out their 2020 financials with big declines in their cash flow. Right now, buyers and banks are more willing to overlook a few months of ugly financials. Next spring, it will be much harder for a buyer to pay top price for a business when the full year 2020 tax return doesn't show enough operating profit to cover a large SBA/bank loan, let alone a rewarding salary for the buyer. Unless sellers are willing to take a much lower sale price than a buyer might pay now, they may need to wait until 2022 or 2023 to get their pre-COVID-19 valuation, assuming a full rebound in profits.

There are still buyers out there looking at business opportunities and many of them perceive auto repair as recession-resistant, compared to other types of businesses. Right now, many buyers are motivated to purchase a business to benefit from the CARES Act SBA incentives that give buyers six months of free loan payments. This special program is only available on deals that close by September 27, 2020, assuming that the money that Congress made available for this program doesn't run out sooner.

Nearly every independent shop owner, chain or franchise operator in the tire and automotive service business has been materially impacted by the effects of COVID-19, despite being considered "essential" services.

Many dealers have called me to say that they have been thinking about selling their business but wonder if the sales declines and employee furloughs will prevent them from being able to find a buyer now. I'm hearing reports of auto service sales reductions of anywhere from 10% - 75%, as consumers are driving less and are fearful of close contact with shop employees, despite many operators enacting "touchless" service protocols.

### Impacts on Buyer Activity

Since many states enacted some form of "Stay at Home" or "Shelter in Place" orders, the impact so far on buyer activity seems to be as follows:

- Many buyer candidates are working from home or temporarily furloughed, so they have time to think about the possibility of being their own boss and doing initial research on business for sale opportunities

- Most were not aware that auto repair businesses were essential and remained open
- Most are not rushing into making a decision. They are treading slowly, and many want to see how quickly life gets back to normal, the pace at which consumer spending recovers, and if there is pent-up demand for auto repairs. On the other hand, buyers get excited when told about the special new SBA incentive program that will 100% cover their first six months of bank payments.

Admittedly, the weekly pace of buyer inquiries is down about 25%, but the good news for sellers is that YOU ONLY NEED ONE BUYER to cash in your chips and retire from the business. Fortunately, the buyers that I have had under contract with existing clients are continuing to move forward in the process.

### Impacts on Seller Activity

A great question that I am getting from sellers is how the steep decline in sales caused by COVID-19 is going to affect their business valuation and ultimate sale price. Obviously, the severity of the decline and the timeline of COVID-19 will impact the valuation. Here are some factors that I believe will impact business valuations in 2020 and 2021:

- Right now, banks and the SBA are doing everything that they can to stimulate the economy and this is a positive factor for buyers and sellers. The good news is that they are IGNORING the sales declines in March and April and are motivated to make SBA 7a guaranteed loans for 90% of the sale price.
- Buyers, on the other hand are likely to be a mixed bag. Some buyers



will use the recent declines and market uncertainty as an argument to negotiate a more significant reduction in the Asking Price. Buyers are sensing that it will become more of a buyer's market the longer that the COVID-19 impact drags on. Many believe that valuations will drop for those sellers who wait a year or two to sell their business. On the other hand, there

are buyers who can recognize a top quality business that can weather a downturn in the market and will make a fair offer price because they don't want to lose the opportunity to purchase a historically high-profit business to another buyer.

- Some sellers are rushing to put their business on the market ASAP because the SBA incentive that covers the first six months of bank payments is scheduled to expire for all loans made after September 27, 2020, or run out of funding sooner. Considering the time it takes to get a business on the market, find a buyer, and get the deal through the financing process, there is no time to spare if the deal needs to close by a specific date.
- Clearly, these are uncertain and emotional times for everyone. There are no easy answers, and everyone is struggling and fearful. Many 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.

For more detailed information, call Art directly at 610.722.5636 or visit [www.art-blumenthal.com](http://www.art-blumenthal.com)

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I am writing this on Memorial Day weekend. The weather is getting sunnier and warmer as it should this time of year. To think that as we entered 2020, none of us knew what was to come. It seemed like my consciousness of the pandemic really started to hit home in mid-March at our last NETSA board meeting. We decided to cancel the trade show

after much debate. In hindsight it was an easy decision to make, but at the time, it was not. What we knew then was that the pandemic was starting to rapidly spread and that a casino with a whole bunch of tire dealers (most of us in the high-risk age group) was not a good idea going forward. A great amount of time, effort, and money had already been spent by NETSA and our suppliers on the show, never mind the revenues that would be lost. It took courage to cancel the trade show, but again, it was the best decision we could live with. When you have a good board of directors made up of both dealers and suppliers, the right decisions usually get made. I have been on the board for close to a quarter of a century now, and our current group ranks right up there with the best I have served with. Now we must move forward and make the best of a bad situation. First, we have committed to awarding 20 NETSA \$2,000 scholarships this year despite the pandemic. A big thanks to our sponsors and to all our members who have made this possible. To me, this is an important symbol of our commitment to the future, Corona Virus be damned. Second, it shows unwavering commitment to our young people who right now are going through a lot of uncertainty regarding their education and their futures. NETSA will help them get through this. The plan right now is to have our annual golf outing in September and to auction off items to benefit the scholarships after golf. We also must start working on the 2021 NETSA Trade Show at Mohegan Sun. What that will look like by then is anybody's guess. It is very fortunate that our Association was fiscally in good shape when the virus hit. We had money socked away for a rainy day and boy did it rain this year! If anything, this pandemic shows why we need to continue to support a vital and active trade association in our New England tire industry. It unites us in a time that we have to socially distance. We just had our NETSA annual meeting on Zoom the other day to ratify board decisions made the previous year and to elect our new slate of officers. I thought the meeting went well. Coming up, we have our June board of directors meeting on Zoom. So, we continue to move forward with NETSA business thanks to today's technology, something we would not have been able to do even a few years ago. Hopefully, we will be able to return things to the "new" normal soon. Thanks to Tony DeSimone and the NETSA executive board for keeping us going during these trying times. Things will get better, but they will never be quite the same.

From the perspective of Maynard and Lesieur, this pandemic

has certainly had its challenges. Business was not great in January and February to begin with, and just when things should normally start picking up in mid-March, the pandemic hit. We only sell tires, so the challenge for us was daunting. We kept all our help for a while but eventually cut back our hours from 50-55 per week to 40 per week. Then as the government announced the PPP, we applied for a forgivable loan through our credit union and were lucky to get one the first time. Many businesses did not. Some of our employees applied for lost wages as a result of our rolled back hours but were told that the state does not pay for lost overtime. We pay our people an hourly wage based on 55 hours a week. We never realized that our employees would be penalized for working more hours, while employees who work 40 hours a week for a much higher wage would be taken care of by the government. As a matter of fact, many of these employees were getting paid more to stay home than to work. So right now, there is a kind of tug of war with employees. Stay home and isolate with your family or go back to work, make less money, and risk exposure to the pandemic. Needless to say, many employees are choosing to stay home. I can't say that I blame them. For my part, I have tried to reduce our tire inventory down by 30-50% or more. The new norm for supplier delivery now is once a day instead of twice a day. Suppliers are also trying to limit employee hours, so I'm not sure if and when we will again receive twice a day delivery. Probably not anytime soon. But I give all our tire suppliers a lot of credit. They maintained daily delivery through the whole pandemic. No easy feat indeed! Overall, they have performed very well through this crisis. Challenges are on the horizon, however. Credit is going to be an ongoing issue. Our commercial tire business has been steady during the crisis, but will we get paid? How many months do you let a good customer slide? Can you expect them to pay interest charges? Our tire suppliers are in the same boat. Do they have a personal guarantee or a UCC? Probably not. Also, there is talk of another national cash for clunkers program, which helps car dealers but hurts our members in the automotive repair business. And you can be sure that OSHA is going to issue strict new workplace regulations regarding business social distancing and how you interact with your employees. Then there is the uncertainty about when a vaccine will be developed and if a new wave will hit in the fall before a vaccine is fully available. Not to mention the toll the pandemic has taken on families of loved ones who have gotten Covid-19 and even died from it, as well as the toll on all the caretakers and first responders at the hospitals and nursing homes. A high percentage of New Hampshire deaths have been from breakouts of the virus in our nursing homes. My father was in a nursing home last year for just a short time and it was difficult on him and our family. I can't imagine what people are going through right now. I guess what keeps us all going is our faith, friends and families and the hope that things will get better. They will. There will be some bumps in the road. But things will get better. Have a nice, warm, safe summer

Larry

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Small businesses are the lifeblood of the economy. The COVID pandemic reminded us of this. In fact, 88% of America's employers have less than 20 employees<sup>1</sup>. Without local businesses, the fabric of our communities are forever changed. As we emerge from the pandemic, we must reflect on these lessons and the

importance of our local businesses.

If we look at restaurants as a parallel to the independent tire dealer, it was the restaurants that had already digitized their business that fared the best during the COVID pandemic. These restaurants used modern software to link themselves to online ordering like Grubhub, Toast, DoorDash, and other platforms—ensuring that they could serve consumers where they were—online. Our industry must do the same.

That's why I founded TireTutor. When I was the New England rep for Hankook Tire, I heard firsthand from independent dealers how they were getting squeezed by the mass merchandisers and e-commerce sites. I made the decision then that I would do something to help independent tire dealers compete in the digital economy. In 2017, while studying at MIT, I launched TireTutor, a platform that connects consumers to local tire dealers. Here are some key takeaways we've learned about digitizing the independent tire dealer.

## Putting Your Inventory and Tire Pricing Online is Now a Necessity

It is fair to say that the internet has completely revolutionized retail—including the way consumers shop for tires. According to Bridgestone, 83% of consumers shop for tires online<sup>2</sup>. Google cites a similar statistic. At TireTutor, we did a scan of dealers' websites across the northeast, and we saw that nearly 70% of dealers don't have online tire inventory with pricing on their own websites. Modern Tire Dealer has stated that at least 50% of your consumers will bounce from your site if it does not have tire pricing. We don't know many dealers that are OK with losing one-out-of-two of their consumers. However, when your inventory and pricing is online, consumers engage with this content and add your store into their "consideration set" when shopping for tires. In other words, consumers want to shop your inventory and pricing online.

## Independent Tire Dealers Can Compete on Price and Win on Service

One of the first concerns we heard from dealers while they apprehensively put their tire inventory online was that they believed they would not be price competitive with e-commerce sites and mass merchandisers. We ran the numbers on this and found that independent dealers are quite competitive with the e-commerce sites. Here are the data: across the board, the average independent

dealer's unit tire prices are 9% more than the average e-commerce website prices on the tire unit. The average independent dealer on TireTutor charges \$27.47 for installation (including disposal) across tens of thousands of tire SKUs and sizes they sell. That's a little less than the \$30.17 average installation charge listed on Tire Rack in ZIP Code 02115 (Boston) for a Honda Accord Coupe EX-L V6 with 235/45R18 tires. When you factor it all together, the independent tire dealer sells and installs tires at 106.6%, or \$14.27 more per tire, including installation, than buying online and paying a store to install. And consumers prefer the buying process at retail outlets, according to Modern Tire Dealer<sup>3</sup>. For many people, avoiding the hassle of buying their tires from one company, paying a different company to install those tires, and being stuck in the middle if the tire requires a warranty adjustment is worth at least \$14 per tire. As independent tire dealers in the communities we serve, we need to make that case to our consumers.

## Tire Sales are Your Gateway to High-Margin Service Sales

Our third key takeaway is that online tire advertising and exposure leads to more overall business for your store. From April 15, 2020, until June 2, 2020, the third most common activity on TireTutor was consumers "clicking-to-call" dealers. The fourth most common activity on TireTutor was consumers selecting "Click for more about this dealer"—a unique page for each dealer that shows the dealer's founding story, its vehicle service pricing, a personal video from that dealer, and the dealer's location. When these consumers arrive in your store, confident from their online research, they spend additional money on service and repair. For example, when TireTutor sends a consumer lead to an independent tire dealer, that consumer spends about 40% more on the actual visit, from additional service upsells made in the store.

## Together, Independent Tire Dealers Have the Scale to Compete Online

Though the tire industry has been less affected than other industries by digitization (because tires still need to be installed), online tire sales have more than doubled in the past decade<sup>4</sup>. E-commerce sites and mass merchandisers are determined to take the tire sales for themselves and render the independent dealer only an installer. We cannot let this happen. As an industry, we need to band together, respond, and rise to the challenge of digitizing our businesses.

1. <https://www.jpmorganchase.com/corporate/institute/small-business-economic.htm>
2. <https://www.moderntiredealer.com/10257/bridgestone-targets-oe-larger-sizes-and-the-boss>
3. *Modern Tire Dealer: 2019 Facts Section.*
4. *Modern Tire Dealer.*



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When I wrote this article in 2019, I spoke about the success of our NETSA Trade Show & Convention at Foxwoods in Connecticut. What a difference this year brings, not only did we have to cancel the Trade Show but a great many of our members are facing difficult times. We are not alone as most businesses were closed throughout New England during the Covid-19 crisis. When you receive this issue all New England will be in the process

of re-opening and trying to work towards normalcy. Although we cancelled the Trade Show there are still a lot of people to thank for the hard work and effort they devoted to how well our Trade Show functions. The efforts of so many people, especially Rich Tuttle- Chairperson Trade Show Committee, Jim Melvin Jr. – Hall of Fame Chairperson, Larry Lesieur-Sponsors Chair, Glenn Wilder and Mark Rochefort – Seminar Co-Chairs, a sincere thank you for all your time and effort. It is very disappointing to be so close one day and cancelled the next. We especially want to thank the sponsors and the exhibitors for their participation, enthusiastic support, and contributions. We look forward to your participation in 2021.

**Nominating Committee**, chaired by Glenn Wilder submitted a great platform of candidates to serve as NETSA officers for 2020-21. President – Blaise Pascale, Vice- President – Rich Tuttle, Secretary – Katie Maguire and Treasurer – Frank Pascale. All were voted into office at our Annual Meeting, which was held on May 16.

**The Golf Committee**, chaired by Jim Melvin Jr, has announced Friday, September 11, 2020 as the tentative date for the 2020 NETSA Scholarship Golf Tournament. We will be returning to Shining Rock Golf Club in Northbridge, Massachusetts for this year's outing. We be mailing the registration form to all our members in August and will be posting further information on our web page NETSA.ORG as well as on-line registration at NETSA.MEMBERCLICKS.NET. We encourage all to attend and remind you that you do not have to be a good golfer to have a great time at this wonderful event. This year's event will be our only opportunity to raise funds for our NETSA Scholarship program. We are committed to awarding twenty scholarships in 2021 and your support is the only way to make that happen.

**The Trade Show Committee**, chaired by Rich Tuttle, is back at work on the 2021 event. The 2021 NETSA Trade Show will be at Mohegan Sun and you should look for an announcement in our next issue.

**The Scholarship Committee**, chaired by Larry Lesieur has received thirty-one applications for our twenty \$2000 scholarships. We plan to have all our recipients notified by mid-June and distribute the checks in late July. We will post the award winners in our next issue of the Road Runner. I am always impressed by the quality of the applicants and the difficulty of selecting the recipients and this year was no different. I congratulate all thirty-one for their outstanding academic achievements while participating in so many extra-curricular activities in their schools and communities.

Coronavirus has impacted how our members have had to conduct business throughout New England. Attention to safety precautions for customers and employees has caused less traffic through their businesses and lost revenue. While business was down significantly, we have experienced a turn around in May and so far, June looks to be continuing that trend.

It was no different for NETSA. We also experienced lost revenue from the cancelation of the 2020 Trade Show and have realized a significant loss of funds for our Scholarship Program. We have also had to put into place safety precautions for our members and our Board Members. We held our first ever Webinar on Zoom for the 2020 NETSA Annual Meeting and were able to conduct our year end business and elect our fine slate of officers. We held several meetings via Zoom with the Executive Committee and as well as our Board of Director's meeting on June 3. NETSA is adapting to the new way of doing business remotely and so far, we are succeeding and conducting the business of NETSA on schedule.

While I try not to voice personal opinions or discuss religion or politics, I feel compelled to break that rule today. While we have lost over one hundred thousand of our fellow citizens due to Coronavirus, including forty-three percent from our most vulnerable citizens that we were pledged to care for, we found a way to add more senseless deaths to that number. The tragic killing of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and George Floyd could have and should have been avoided. These deaths have led to peaceful protests across the country. We have also seen additional deaths, countless injuries, and a lot of destruction of business and property. We need to be better than this, we are better than this, I want to be better and I will be better. I am encouraged when I look at the accomplishments of our scholarship applicants and feel heartened that they will be a positive influence on us all.

Thank you once again to all the members who help so much to make my job so much fun even while sheltering in place. I wish you all a Happy Fourth of July and a great summer. See you at Shining Rock.

*Tony DeSimone*



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No event in recent history has impacted our world and way of life as much as the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Originating in China, the Coronavirus disease, quickly spread and has now grown into a global health pandemic.

In January, the COVID-19 was declared a public health emergency and numerous state governments and federal agencies have been involved in the national legislative response to the coronavirus outbreak. To keep track of the latest state and local government actions on COVID-19, visit the official government response to COVID-19 page at [www.aotocare.org/coronavirus](http://www.aotocare.org/coronavirus)

Since the global outbreak of coronavirus, over 120 bills have been introduced in 40 state legislatures, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia on paid sick leave and worker protections as well as appropriations requests. Over 300 executive actions have been issued in 50 states, Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, Guam, and the Virgin Islands related to declarations of states of emergency, school closures, prohibition of mass gatherings, retail and business closures and restrictions, and stay at home orders. Over 1,100 executive actions have been issued in total. Over 20 state task forces have been established by 12 governors. And, over 30 states and the District of Columbia have issued emergency COVID-19 regulations on several issues including but not limited to health insurance carriers, labor and wage, and medical licensure. Sixty-nine (69) legislative chambers have either temporarily adjourned, moved to virtual meetings, or announced an early recess or sine die.

State and local government officials have established a myriad of policies to counter the coronavirus outbreak. With the public health

at risk, many state and local governments have taken decisive action to control the spread of COVID-19. These policies vary greatly by state. We have created a comprehensive state by state dashboard highlighting state and local government actions in response to the ever-changing Coronavirus Pandemic. The State and Local Government responses to COVID-19 dashboard includes State Legislation, Executive Orders and local actions conveniently broken down by state. It details legislative actions related to paid leave proposals, mandated business closures, appropriations for state responses to the coronavirus outbreak and Executive actions such as the creation of task forces and declarations of emergency. Selected state agency, regulatory and rulemaking actions are also being included as they are announced or emerge. We have also identified those legislatures that have suspended activities as a result of this public health crisis. Updates to our COVID response by state report are continuously being made as new actions emerge.

State and local governments have now begun to craft plans to reopen their economies as the risks of the COVID-19 pandemic begin to recede. Understanding the reopening processes – and navigating the tangled framework of state executive, agency, legislative, and local government actions within which you will have to operate – will be challenging. I encourage you to review the latest executive order by your states Governor as well any declarations by your county health department. These are challenging times we face as an industry but together we will prevail. Feel free to contact me if you have specific questions about any state or local directive. We are here to help and support your efforts as the auto repair provider of choice in your community.

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# Mergers & Acquisitions During Public a Crisis

Michael McGregor, Focus Investment Banking LLC

The Road Runner  
Summer 2020

Are mergers and acquisitions ("M&A") still going on during this very strange time you ask? The short answer is yes. While some of the larger players in the space like Monro Auto Service & Tire Centers have publicly stated that all acquisitions are on hold, below the level of the largest strategic acquirers, activity is still chugging along. How can this be? Let's examine some reasons why from the buyer's and seller's perspectives.

If a buyer was interested expanding via acquisition before, they'll still be interested now, albeit a bit more cautiously. Private equity has backed New York-based companies like Mavis Discount Tire which went through with its deal to acquire 112 TBC stores in Atlanta, Chicago, Boston and Philadelphia even during the Covid 19 pandemic. Mavis is chasing revenue and profitability to improve its value, and is looking to do this in as short a time as possible. Now while I have no doubt that Mavis is managing its cash flow and debt ratios with extra caution right now, they have to be looking beyond the summer to when things get closer to normal and their expansion plans can continue or even speed up. Speaking of normal, one bright spot that every tire dealer needs to look at has to be the Dow Jones Industrial Average that as of this writing was at 26,281 - up 40% from its lowest point on March 23rd. That's a leading indicator that things may be getting better down the road a bit.

In addition to a buyer's strategic determination to grow, there is still a good amount of money that lenders can provide strategic acquirers to make deals happen. Lenders are flush with

cash and trillions of dollars from the US Treasury have flooded the economy so there is no widespread liquidity crisis for many businesses. No buyer puts in all cash on M&A transactions. Available leverage enhances deal valuations and greases the M&A wheels.

While buyers can and still want to buy tire businesses, expect them to be chasing quality or good values in the short term. Quality is represented by the tire dealer I know that had a better April of 2020 than they had in April of 2019. Or by a tire chain I'm representing that has a solid footprint, loyal employees and good upside potential. Value is represented by transactions not being in the lofty multiple ranges of just last year. If a multi-store chain was expecting a 7 multiple in this market, they should be looking at less. In other words, a transaction in which the seller has reasonable valuation expectations is one that is more likely to attract a buyer in this market.

Expectations of finding fair values are attracting new buyer entrants that have been on the sidelines waiting to get in. For example, some private equity companies looking for that smaller platform investment that they can use to bolt on acquisitions to are snooping around the Northeast. Another example is my overseas client looking for OTR and commercial tire distribution companies in the US to invest in. Both of these types of buyers have either long held strategic objectives or interest in the space that you play in and they see a window of opportunity to get the attention of sellers who want to or have to sell right now.

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Now let's look at M&A from the seller's perspective in this strange time. First, if you are an aging tire dealer with no family to take over your business, retirement still beckons and at some point you may want to sell. The reality is that it takes a while to make a sale happen so you might want to think about starting the process now. If you are a tire dealer whose business has been hurt in this downturn to the point where you really need to sell, don't wait. Do it now while you still have something to sell. And if you have a division within your business that is not core to your mission, you still might want to sell it off to focus your attention and resources. Those are three real world examples of why sellers are still going forward with selling their tire-related business in this very strange environment.

In terms of regional activity, M&A activity is good in the Northeast US and in the Western US. It's a little quiet right now in the Central and Southern regions.

*Michael McGregor is a Managing Director at Focus Investment Banking LLC ([focusbankers.com/tire-and-service](http://focusbankers.com/tire-and-service)) and advises and assists multi-location tire dealers on mergers and acquisitions in the auto aftermarket. For more information contact him at [michael.mcgregor@focusbankers.com](mailto:michael.mcgregor@focusbankers.com).*

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*Okay, Google – navigate me to...*

*Alexa, where's the nearest...*

**Siri, can you find the phone number for...**

Voice search has changed the way we look for information. In our cars, on our phones, on the move, in our homes, we turn to voice assistants like Siri, Alexa, Google, and Cortana to help us find the information we need, deliver commands, or accomplish simple tasks.

Users for some time had voice search technology within smartphones, but now that same technology has expanded throughout our cars, homes, and within connected devices.

Voice search can take place anywhere the user has a device available, creating a host of new opportunities for businesses to connect and be found.

## The 3 Types of Voice Search

To take advantage of this technology for your business, you first must understand the types of voice commands and searches that take place. They usually fall into three categories: commands, questions, and local searches.

**Commands:** For example, asking your device to *"Search for car tires."*

Users know that Siri, Alexa, Google, and Cortana are here to serve and will often make commands to these digital personal assistants.

**How to Apply to Your Business:** To target commands in search, include keywords in your website that connect to actions. Keyword phrases like "buy" or "shop for" in your website content can help voice assistants understand what products and services your business offers.

**Questions:** Digital assistants are also used to answer questions. For example, *"Where is the nearest auto repair shop?"*

Connected devices have human elements like names and personalities hard-wired in. Users can ask questions of their devices as they would a colleague. Questions are one of the most popular ways to use a search function within any device.

**How to Apply to Your Business:** To reach voice assistants through your website content, be sure to think about FAQs. If there are common questions related to your product or service, include relevant content on webpages promoting your product or service. You can also think about a Q&A page. Targeting questions directly is a great SEO tactic to reach browsing or curious customers who are researching before buying.

**Local Searches:** Users will most likely search for services and products in their community. An example of this: *"Wheel alignments near me."*

Users want not only relevant but local search results, especially for auto repair or tires. This will most likely translate to phrases like "near me" "nearby" or "in [local town name]" in searches.

**How to Apply to Your Business:** Location signals are great for targeting searches that are specific to a geography. Include queries like "near me" or "nearby" in your content, as well as descriptors that can give details about your location, such as naming nearby landmarks. Rich snippet markup (i.e. structured data HTML tags that give richer information to search engines) will be helpful for sending location signals to voice engines.

Now that you know about key types of voice search, let's apply best practices to better reach searchers using a voice command.

## Include Answers in Ad Copy, Content, & Meta Tags

Relevant writing will target and encourage users to interact with a business. Your SEO and paid search campaigns will also benefit by using content that's optimized for voice search. Here's how to make it happen for your tire shop:

### Ad Copy

For a pay-per-click campaign that is optimized for voice search users, it's recommended to use questions or statements -- similar to the three types of voice search -- within the ad copy itself.

You can also implement ad extensions like extended snippets that list the tire brands you carry or location extensions to reach local searchers.

### Content

Within a landing page for an organic listing, relevancy is still key, but you need to write content in a way that search engines will also understand it. The semantic web refers to how language within the website code is identified and understood. This means that search engines can read your website "We provide tires to Birmingham Alabama" and know to reach out to those searching for "Tires in Birmingham".

Be sure to enrich your website with helpful information that can give users the answers they need or make it easy for them to take action. Voice search assistants will be able to pick up on this context and deliver your business in the results.

### Meta Tags

Your meta tags are also places to optimize for voice searches. Like ad copy, these descriptions should call users to your site. Update your meta tags to also include answers to the three types of voice searches above. Remember: meta tags are the only place in the search engine where you can get free advertising copy!

## Optimize for Mobile

As mentioned, the audiences using at-home devices for voice search are growing. But mobile devices still have a strong hold on the voice search market. Creative Strategies via The Economist reports that around one third of smartphone owners use the personal assistant regularly, and at least 95% will or have tried using it.

Mobile voice search is another wave of mobile users. Having a

responsive design for a web page is ideal for usability, but the page should also be scannable -- with the most important information at the top.

Also, by claiming and verifying your Google My Business listing, your business can show as a featured element in Google search results. Users can place calls or find directions using Google My Business features on mobile devices. It's a great advantage to list as a featured element in Google since these information cards allow the user easy access.

## Bringing It All Together

Voice searchers use their personal assistants to answer questions or apply commands quickly and hands-free. Make sure you reach those audiences by applying these key tactics to your website:

- Use keywords that match the three types of searches through voice above: commands, questions, and local searches.
- Include questions and answers in your landing pages, meta tags, and ad copy for engagement beyond search results.
- Use structured data or rich snippet markup to send additional information to search engines about your website.
- Make sure you're fast, easy to use, and mobile-friendly.

Voice search is an emerging and changing trend in internet marketing, but it's one that for now, is here to stay. Make sure your website - and business - is prepared.

*This article was created by the team at Net Driven. Learn more about Net Driven digital marketing solutions by visiting [www.netdriven.com](http://www.netdriven.com).*

## Your TPMS Headquarters



This week I want to talk about the value of a sanity check. When I was a student, I had this business class and the professor brought in successful business leaders from the area. And there was one that came in that I actually had a chance to spend quite a bit of time with after I graduated and got married and everything. But I remember in his presentation, he used this term sanity check and I thought it was really cool the way

he used it and the way he said he utilized it in his company. And I had a sanity check this past week that my wife helped me with. We had a flat tire and it's embarrassing to say, I haven't changed a flat tire in probably about 40 years. Well, the technology is different now from what it used to be. I mean you still have lug nuts, but some of them lock on. And back in my day you had a full-size spare tire mounted somewhere in or on the car or the SUV. And it was a pretty simple thing to figure everything out. Well, now everything is well hidden. It's just so well engineered. I was marveling at the engineering of it, but to get this mini spare that we have now available you had to basically crank it out on this cable. And so, the tire comes down and I grab it and pull on it. Well, it's still on this cable. It's got like a hockey puck thing that's

holding the tire up against the underside of the car. And I looked at it and there was no place to unscrew it on the outside. And I pulled on it thinking it might just pop off, that didn't work. And my wife looked at it and she couldn't figure it out. And I'm ready to call AAA to come give us a tow and help this poor old man, if can't figure out how to get the spare off. And after a minute or two, my wife took this hockey puck thing and it won't come through the hole it's too big. She just turned it this way. She just turned it 90 degrees and it slipped right through. And suddenly we're off and running we got our spare on and we were able to get home okay. She said it was a team effort and it was because I was about to completely give up. And why is that? What does that got to do with business and what does it got to do with us?

Well the point is this, I was taking the lead on getting this tire changed. I was situationally leading at that point, but sometimes even the best leaders need help from their teams. They're sometimes blind as I was to a different possibility. I was trying to do this, and I just needed to do that, that simple. So, I needed help with that. Sometimes leaders are just flat out wrong. They see things wrong, they interpret things wrong. They just don't see the whole picture somehow. And I can think of the biggest classic business case for this was New Coke.

If you guys remember New Coke introduced with much fanfare and golly Moses, we would all as leaders give anything to have a brand like Coke. And here these geniuses came along and they said well, we're going to toss this old one away. And now we have New Coke and it's going to be better. And the market reacted in the worst

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possible way. It was a disaster and a flop, probably the most famous business flop in all of modern business history. I don't think those leaders subjected themselves to sanity checks. It is a team effort and leaders need a team of equals. It's not okay in my opinion to have a king and then everybody else sort of relying on that Monarch for making decisions. I think the best leaders have teams of equals and these equals push the leaders, they push each other, they challenge each other, they evaluate all kinds of different alternatives and possibilities. They debate and they sometimes disagree aggressively with each other. Not tactlessly but sometimes they really do have differences and they have to work through those things. But that makes the team stronger. So, if I think back to this business class that I had and the definition of sanity check, I think a sanity check is a team of equals that pushes a leader and then listening, that's the key.

*You've got to listen to your team* Blog Transcript – The Value of a Sanity Check May 21st, 2020 [www.familybusinessinstitute.com](http://www.familybusinessinstitute.com)  
 • Phone: 877-326-2493 • Fax: 919-783-1892 COPYRIGHT © 2020 THE FAMILY BUSINESS INSTITUTE, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. so that they can help you get the tire changed when you're too blind to figure it out yourself. I'd like to have your comments. Maybe you have some good stories where your wives were able to point you in the right direction too. This is Wayne Rivers at The Family Business Institute. Thank you.

*Photo (R) circa 2015 NETSA Trade Show*



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Ok, here we go. I've had, as you might imagine, dozens of complaints on how people act on Zoom calls. And certainly not on purpose, we all know that. However, the need has come to go over the top ten ZOOM ZOMBIES as I'm calling them. And not in any special order, they all seem to be irritants.

## Zoom Zombie #1

Use a REAL BACKGROUND from your location. FAKE IS FAKE. No one really believes you're on the beach and doing a Zoom meeting. And while it's "FUN," it can be very distracting. And those that change the background several times during the meeting is simply childlike. Your office, your family room, dining room, even the kitchen. We all know we're at home. Messy office? It's ok. Honest. Having the San Francisco bridge behind you isn't that important and certainly Las Vegas in the background can be 'loser-ish.' (Pun intended)

## Zoom Zombie #2

Keep good lighting in FRONT of you. Not behind you. Test it out first. Get a Zoom partner, if even someone in your own home, to test the lighting out. It's like taking your picture outside. If the SUN is behind you, normally your face is in the dark. Get the 'sun' in front of you and you look great. Same issue on Zoom.

## Zoom Zombie #3

Dogs, kids, and other members yelling in the background. Never fun – on any phone call, let alone Zoom. Be prepared. In most cases you know you have a Zoom call coming up. Get the dog in another area of the house. If you can, have someone occupy them while you're on the Zoom meeting. Alone? Then try and put the Zoom meeting at a time kids are napping or already in bed. Or before they get up. Schedule it. Most of the barking, crying, and extraneous noises are NOT appreciated.

## Zoom Zombie #4

We don't eat during a business meeting. This one is frightening that I even need to say it. Not even a snack. Yes, ok for some water. But munching on a sandwich or opening a bag of popcorn or chips magnifies the sound 10-fold. A real OMG. Who is doing that? It's a business meeting. Even the movement of a water bottle on a desk makes a big sound. That's where you need to learn to use your MUTE.

## Zoom Zombie #5

Be a little bit creative. I have noticed so many people use the same word in starting each sentence. "SO" is the big one. So this and so that. We don't need the word "SO" in front of every sentence. And while you're at it. Be mindful of how often you're saying UMMMM. Most folks use it as a crutch.

## Zoom Zombie #6

Your name will appear on your picture. Notice if you put the cursor over the name you will be able to change what it says. Some folks put their email there. Or the company name. You can customize that part. There are two ways. One, put the cursor right over your name. And two, the 3 little dots in the upper right on the screen has a "change name" option. Again, only if you want to.

## Zoom Zombie #7

Learn – Learn – Learn. Practice – Practice – Practice. Ahead of time. Practice with a friend or a home companion – or even by yourself. Check out the screen options. This way when you're on the Zoom meeting, you won't be the one yelling out "where is this or how do I do this?" Don't let a business Zoom meeting be your very first. You can have rehearsals. Be familiar with the screen...and its options.

## Zoom Zombie #8

You're on the air. It's TV. Sit up straight. Don't slump. No one looks good when they're slumping. Very unflattering. Keep your hands AWAY from your face. Don't lean into your palm with your palm on your face. Very unflattering. And watch your nervous habits. We all have them; we're just not aware. Some folks play with their hair constantly. Some folks bite their nails. Some do other odd things. Be aware.

## Zoom Zombie #9

On a personal note: Having a "happy hour" with friends? You can probably forget most of these guidelines. Although I'm betting they'll appreciate your sticking with them...as you will them.

## Zoom Zombie #10

Smile. You think I'd forget? You knew that was coming, didn't you? Think it doesn't matter? Show me a picture of you that you don't like and I'll show you it's a picture where you're not smiling. At least keep a hint of a grin on your face. No one looks good frowning. And you can use the Telephone Doctor mindset. "A phony smile is better than a real frown." Even when you're discussing something difficult or sad. I'm not saying to laugh out loud, but I am saying having a slight smile will help the tone of voice.



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# 5 Ways to Control Your Benefits Costs

By Jeff Mishol, Colonial Life

The Road Runner  
Summer 2020

Benefits costs remain a concern and employers are always looking for a way to alleviate the burden from their bottom line and the employee's pocket. The good news is there are many proven, effective ways to contain those ever-increasing benefits costs — and many can be implemented at no direct cost to your company.

Here are five smart ways you can save money on the benefits you offer your employees.

## 1. Implement wellness initiatives.

Many employers today are implementing wellness initiatives — efforts to improve the overall health of their employees — to help reduce health care costs and increase productivity.

## 2. Move noncore benefits to employee-paid voluntary benefits.

Using voluntary benefits can give employees access to expanded benefits choices that meet their unique family situations and provide coverage that's typically more affordable than plans offered outside of work.

## 3. Conduct a dependent verification audit.

Sure, your company wants to offer great benefits to employees and qualifying family members — but not to those who aren't actually eligible for coverage. Sometimes employees forget to remove family members who no longer qualify because of age or marital status. Health plan audits, also called dependent verification, ensure you're investing your benefits dollars where you intend them to be used.

## 4. Increase employee participation in pretax benefits programs.

Establishing Section 125 plans and maximizing employee

participation in pretax benefits programs can save your company and your staff considerable dollars. Pretaxing benefits gives employees the option to buy qualified insurance coverage with before-tax dollars. This makes coverage more affordable by reducing the taxable portion of their pay, so they pay lower income taxes. Section 125 plans allow employees to make before-tax contributions to personal spending accounts that can be used for qualifying health care or child care expenses. These plans reduce your overall payroll, so they can also reduce your payroll taxes, including FICA, Social Security and Medicare matching taxes.

## 5. Customize benefits communication and enrollment.

It's hard to choose the right benefits if you don't understand them — or even worse, don't know what your options are. Educating employees about benefit choices available to them and how to select the benefits that work best for their lifestyles takes expertise. Fortunately, these services — including one-to-one benefits counseling sessions — are available at no direct cost to the employer from some benefits providers. Employee satisfaction rates with this type of service has shown to be high.

Hopefully your business, whether large or small, can implement 1 or more of these programs to keep benefits costs in check.

*Jeff Mishol*  
Colonial Life & Benefits  
NETSA Member  
781-799-4598

WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE  
COLONIAL LIFE & ACCIDENT INSURANCE  
HAS BEEN ENDORSED BY



## VOLUNTARY SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS

Help protect your family finances and future

### What are voluntary benefits?

Sometimes called "supplemental insurance," these often employee-paid benefits can stand alone or fill gaps in major medical and other insurance coverage



CO-PAYS OR CO-INSURANCE



REPLACING WAGES OR SAVINGS



BILLS

### The advantage of enhanced insurance plan options

- More affordable options with **LOWER RATES & NO MEDICAL QUESTIONS**
- Special rates specifically approved for **NETSA Member businesses**



ACCIDENT INSURANCE



DISABILITY INSURANCE



CANCER & CRITICAL ILLNESS INSURANCE



LIFE INSURANCE

### CONTACT US TO LEARN MORE

Jeff Mishol, NETSA Member

Toll Free: 866-242-1862 | [jeff.mishol@coloniallifesales.com](mailto:jeff.mishol@coloniallifesales.com)



# *Scrap Tire Recycling*

BDS Waste Disposal provides scrap tire storage, collection, transportation, and recycling services throughout New England. We provide scheduled route/on-call individual tire collection and scrap tire container services in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and Massachusetts. We provide box trailer and bulk tire collection services in all New England states. Our business is focused on providing exceptional service. We utilize late model, well maintained equipment and uniformed professional drivers and operators.



## Collection, Transportation & Processing

We own and operate:

- 10 road tractors (trucks)
- 4 packer trucks
- 200+ trailers
- 8 tire shredders

Tires are unloaded and shredded at our MEDEP licensed processing facility.

# ***BDS Waste Disposal, Inc.***

For more information, visit: [bdswastedisposal.com](http://bdswastedisposal.com)

Phone: (207) 278-3833

As the economy slowly starts to re-open amidst the Covid-19 pandemic employers will slowly start to bring their employees back to their normal full-time positions. With this return to work will come the challenge of remembering to work safely. Many employees haven't been performing their normal job functions at full speed for several months. To accomplish this goal, it will take a mental approach, as well as the employer stepping up and reminding the employees of their commitment to safety and of the key safe work practices to follow.

## How to Mentally Prepare Coming Back to Work:

- The night before your first day back to work ensure you are well rested, as the first day back can be overwhelming and mentally / physically exhausting.
- Be in a positive mindset before you walk into work, and try to leave all of the stress and other worries occurring in your life behind. This will allow you to stay focused and work safer at a higher level.
- Get as organized as possible and get reacclimated with your work environment.
- Before an employee starts to do their actual job duties again, it is critical they walk through the job in their head and remember all the hazards associated with their specific tasks. Then to remember what safe work practices they previously implemented.

## Role Employer Can Take to Remind Staff About Working Safely:

Have the company hold a safety meeting with all employees as they come back to work, and remind the staff of the company's dedication to working safely. This would also be a great time to re-educate your staff on how to prevent the most common types of injuries. Listed below are those injury categories with preventative measures associated with each.

### Slip, Trip, Fall Prevention:

- Watch and be aware of your surroundings while you are walking.
- Maintain good housekeeping (clean up oil and water spills immediately, ensure sufficient cleanup of workstations, mark spills and wet areas, keep walking paths / isles / stairs clear).
- Use handrails when going up and down steps.
- Walk slowly and take smaller steps if the area is slippery / wet, uneven, or at an angle.
- Wear slip resistant footwear.
- Roll up all electrical cords and hoses when not being used.

### Strain Prevention:

- Utilize mechanical assistance equipment (forklift, ladders, dolly, pallet jack, engine hoist, car pusher, etc.) to move

heavy items.

- Utilize proper lifting techniques.
- Utilize teamwork to move heavy / bulky items.
- Organize materials so heavy items are on the floor and light items at the higher levels.
- Changing up the employees work to reduce their exposure to a certain repetitive task can also help.
- Implementing a 10 minute "stretch and flex" program before the workday begins. This will help loosen up muscles and better prepare the body to handle the physical demand of the day.

### Eye Injury Prevention:

- Wearing proper eyewear while performing certain job functions (safety glasses, face shields, goggles, welding helmets, etc.).
- Ensure all machines have proper functioning guards on them.
- Maintain eye wash stations and ensure they are conveniently located.

### Motor Vehicle Accident Prevention:

- Review defensive driving tactics with employees who drive company property (delivery vehicles, tow trucks, etc.).
- Ensure driving records are maintained yearly and reviewed.
- Ensure all forklift certifications are up to date.
- Ensure all heavy equipment operators are properly certified.

### Chemical Injury Prevention:

- Have a hazardous communication program in place which consists of an up to date list of Safety Data Sheets for all chemicals used at your business.
- All employees should be trained on how to read the SDS sheets so they can take appropriate action if exposure to a chemical occurs.
- All chemicals should be labeled, which consists of name, address and telephone number, product identifier, signal word, hazard statement(s), precautionary statement(s), pictogram(s).



## Computer Software

### **ASA Tire Systems:**

Dave Vogel (603) 889-8700

- Complete Software for the Automotive & Tire Business at a 10% Discount

## Credit Card Service

### **Nationwide Payment:**

Brian Soares (207) 400-4495

- Free 100K Dollar Breach Insurance.
- Free Equipment
- Free Online Processing Gateway
- Gift & Loyalty Card Marketing Programs
- No Increase Rate Guarantees

## Merchant Partners

Sales (866) 814-4083

- Meet or Beat pricing for NETSA Members
- They also Process Industry & Fleet Cards
- Check Guarantee Service

## Dental Coverage

### **NEAD Insurance Trust/Ameritas:**

Charlie Muise (781) 706-6944

- \$1750 Calendar Year Maximum
- Rates guaranteed until April 1, 2021
- No waiting periods
- Coverage for single, spouse, family
- High-low plans available

## Employee Supplemental Benefits

## **Colonial Life & Accident Insurance Company - NEW**

Jeff Mishol (781)799-4598

Voluntary supplemental benefits customized for NETSA members, making it easy for employees to qualify. Plans available include disability, accident, critical illness, hospital confinement and life insurance. Employees purchase the benefits they desire through the convenience of payroll deduction.

## Group Benefits and Administration

## **National Automotive Roads and Fuel Association - NEW**

Vinnie Daboul – (603) 932-6472

Established in 1929 with the goal of providing strength and stability for businesses in the

automotive, roads, fuel and other related industries. We offer our members a full suite of employee benefits (medical, voluntary life, disability, critical illness and accident) wellness programs and benefit administration.

## Insurance Coverage

### **Affiliated Insurance Agency:**

Phil Muller (516) 576-0166

- All forms of insurance for the tire and rubber industry since 1981
- Comprehensive comparison review of current insurance portfolio for retailers, wholesalers, commercial, industrial, retreaters and manufacturers
- Insurance products included but not limited to: Property, Liability, Automobile, Employment Practices Liability and Cyber Liability
- Employee Benefits

## Lease to Own

### **Progressive leasing:**

Aric Wredberg (267) 372-9270

- Providing virtual lease-to-own for customers since 1999
- Best-in-class customer support
- Customers could pay off early with 90-day purchase options

## Legislative Monitoring

NETSA is constantly monitoring the State Legislative activities concerning the Tire & Automotive Industry in all six New England States. We have actively participated in representing our members' views on many such legislative issues.

## Marketing & Analytics

### **TireTutor - NEW**

Jimmy Gogan – (781) 205-9148

Our goal is to make buying tires easy for the consumer while driving business back to independent dealers. Our comparison-shopping website brings visibility to local dealers, helping them compete with larger chains and online retailers. Our proprietary software helps dealers understand where their pricing stands in the marketplace. We offer a free 3-month trial of our platform, followed by a discounted NETSA rate.

## Oil Products

### **Brenntag Lubricants:**

Jim Rogers (860) 250-2076

- Valvoline Quality Products - Motor Oils, Trans Fluids, Grease, Oil & Air Filters, Fuel Inj. Cleaners, Antifreeze & Wiper Blades all earning rewards

points/money.

- Free Valvoline POS Imaging & Training
- VPS Equipment & Marketing Program

## Publications

### **Road Runner:**

Our Newsletter is published four times a year (March, June, September & December) with information & fun articles. Free to members.

## Social Media

### **Optimize Social Media**

Ben Moore (218) 213-2251

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

## Scholarships

- As a member business, your employees & their dependents qualify for academic scholarships. This year NETSA and our sponsors, will provide nineteen \$2000 scholarships to member employees, their spouses, and their dependents.

## Tire Industry Market Facts

### **GfK Benchmarking:**

Neil Portnoy (212) 884-9269

- Monthly Benchmarking reporting
- Your store(s) vs. Market
- Sales, Share, Price; all by product line.
- Know what customers are buying, so you could make informed inventory decisions

## Trade Show & Annual Meeting

- 50-plus exhibitors with over 110 booths.
- Free training seminars
- Annual Meeting with Keynote Speakers
- Prizes & fun for the entire family.

## Training

- We participate in TIA's Certified ATS Program for tire technicians, the TPMS Program, and the CTS Truck Tire Program

## Web Site

### **Net Driven:**

sales@netdriven.com (877) 860-2005 x298

Net Driven provides Industry leading solutions to drive your business. They will build, host, & update your site at reduced NETSA Member rates. Our website is hosted by them at www.netsa.org



For More information please contact: Tony DeSimone  
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email: netsapros@aol.com  
website: www.netsa.org

# Road Runner

*of New England Tire & Service Association*

*Mark your Calendar*

**2020 NETSA Scholarship Golf Outing**

Shining Rock Golf Club - Northbridge, MA

Friday, September 11, 2020



The Road Runner  
Summer 2020



3 Lefevre Dr.  
Kingston, NH 03848