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NETSA Back on Track After Trade Show

Rich Tuttle, Vice President NETSA, Trade Show Committee Chair

At the Annual Meeting at Foxwoods April 1 and 2, 2022, I addressed the membership on the state of NETSA over the past few years. This included the Covid Nineteen pandemic starting in 2020 and going through most of 2021, cancelling all our 2020 events, delaying, and rescheduling our Trade Show and Golf Tournament in 2021, and all the unknowns going into 2022. Through it all NETSA had a plan. We knew it was going to take time to recover our losses from 2020. Like I explained at the meeting our plan was simple. Do better this year than last year. So far it is working, 2021 was better than 2020. We were able to do our events, delaying or rescheduling them, and give out twenty scholarships. Now in 2022, so far, things are looking good. We had a successful Trade Show April 1 and 2, in its usual time slot, at Foxwoods Resort Casino. We sold more booths, we had more exhibitors, and almost 50% more attendees than we did in 2021. Coming in September our NETSA Scholarship Golf outing is in its usual time slot. NETSA is on track to have a great year and of course do better than last year.

NETSA would like to thank the 41 exhibitors, up from 36 in 2021, occupying 90 booths, up from 75 in 2021, at this year's Trade Show. We know that we asked a lot from them this year, with the 2 shows only seven months apart. We genuinely appreciate their support.

Attendance was up almost 50% over last year. On Friday night we had a great turnout of mostly owners and decision makers. For the exhibitor this was a terrific opportunity to spend valuable time and promote their products to an engaged audience. On Saturday we had a good mix of owners, counter people and techs all enjoying the show. NETSA would like to thank all for attending and supporting us.



On Saturday we had 3 standing room only seminars, with 108 people in attendance at each. These well attended and highly informative seminars:

continued on pg 2



Hello I am Katie Maguire and I want to thank you all for choosing me as your new president, I am excited about what I can bring to the association during my time as leader. To help better get to know me here is a bit about my journey in the automotive industry.

I got started in the industry while attending Bridgewater State College in the early 2000's, as well as working three part time jobs to help pay for college and my beat-up Pontiac 6000. Mohawk Rubber Sales

offered me a position to do filing and odd jobs around the office, so I quit my three part time jobs and started what became my 20-year (and counting) career in September 2002. I applied for a NETSA scholarship and received a \$1,000 scholarship. I graduated in 2004 with a degree in Fine Arts and a minor in Art History as well as Photography.

When Mohawk hired me, Patrick, and Brian McGeoghegan, as well as a few others, took me under their wings and taught me the industry. I felt like a sponge, I wanted to know how to do everything. I asked for as much training as I could get and thankfully Mohawk allowed me to take the classes I needed to help me succeed as a Customer Service Specialist.

Looking back to when I was nineteen, I feel like I lacked the confidence to make the right decisions and to know what I wanted to do with my future. I had changed my major a few times and moved around quite a bit and always felt I did not have a place that quite felt like I belonged. Mohawk is now my second home and the people I work with are not just co-workers, they are family.

What I hope to accomplish in my term as president is to work with technical and vocational schools, and to talk to the students who are either going to continue their education or move into the workforce. We all know that we need young, skilled workers to take over when the older workforce retires. I feel if we work with the other associations and produce a plan, we will have greater success. As Mason Hess, the new TIA President said, "there isn't a day that goes by that we aren't talking about good people and employee retention." When I spoke to Mason on the phone, we talked about NETSA and other associations working together to produce a program nationwide for our industry. We need to help motivate the next generation of independent tire dealers, mechanics, and suppliers. We need to make it beneficial for them to want to continue their education and training in this field. I think the worst thing schools could have done was take away trades. Just about all things learned at a trade school can be turned into a lifelong carrier.

Again, I would like to thank you for electing me. Together I hope we can expand the knowledge and accomplish the growth that I feel is important and necessary for the future of our industry.

NETSA Back on Track

continued from pg. 1

1. EV and HEV Preventive Maintenance
2. The Future of Electric Cars, Trucks, and Fleets
3. Tool and Equipment Needed to Service HEV and EV

were presented by Craig Van Batenburg from ACDC. Craig did an excellent job informing, teaching, and helping attendees understand the future of our industry. The seminars earned great reviews by the attendees. NETSA wants



l-r : Bob Vacca & Stuart Schuette.

to thank Craig for making this one of the best training sessions in years.

At our Luncheon & Annual Meeting our keynote speaker, Stuart Schuette, President and Chief Executive Officer of American Tire Distributors (ATD) (*pictured left*), gave insight into where we are and what lies ahead in our

industry. From supply chain and employee shortages to how to prepare for the future, Stuart gave us all something to think about. He opened our eyes to what is going on and what it takes to survive in the tire and auto repair business. NETSA and all in attendance thank him for coming.

At our 2022 NETSA Hall Of Fame Dinner and Scholarship Auction we inducted two new members, the late Blaise Pascale of Holyoke Tire & Auto Service and Robert Vacca (*pictured left*) of American Tire Distributors (ATD). The Scholarship Auction was the most successful fundraiser we ever had at the Trade Show. We are well on our way to fund our scholarships for 2023. Thanks to all that made this happen.

We at NETSA want to thank our Trade Show sponsors; American Tire Distributors, Continental Tire, Cooper Tire, County Tire, Max Finkelstein INC, Mickey Thompson Tire, Mohawk Rubber Sales, NAPA Auto Sales, Nexen Tire America, Nokian Tyres, Sullivan Tire, and Toyo Tires. Without them there is no NETSA or a NETSA Trade Show.

Finally, I want to thank Tony DeSimone and all the Board of Directors for all their help. I am happy to announce that the 2023 NETSA Trade Show will be at Mohegan Sun March 31 - April 1. Mark your calendar and we will see you there.

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What a tumultuous time we are going through in our country right now. Every day the news gets a little worse. I try to stay focused on the positive aspects of my life and work to keep a positive attitude. One of those positive items was a particularly good Trade Show in April. We had a record number of attendees at our Saturday morning seminars presented by Craig Van Batenburg from ACDC in Worcester, Massachusetts. One hundred and eight people showed up to learn more about the emerging market for

Hybrid and Electric Vehicles. Craig did an excellent job of informing our members and attendees about why they need to look hard and soon at this new opportunity. It was encouraging to see that our members are keen to learn about this market and placed enough importance on this seminar that many brought their techs and management teams to learn as well. Our Annual Meeting and Luncheon on Saturday was another successful event with a sellout crowd of one hundred and seventy people in attendance to hear from Stuart Schuette, President and Chief Executive Officer of American Tire Distributors talk about some of our current challenges such as supply chain, employee shortages, and the emerging Hybrid and Electric Vehicle markets. Stuart offered great insight into what lies ahead for our industry and for our families. We closed the show with our Hall of Fame Dinner and auction. We congratulate Bob Vacca of American Tire and the family of the late Blaise Pascale for their induction into the 2022 Hall of Fame. We ended the festivities with our most successful auction ever raising over fifteen thousand dollars for our Scholarship Fund.

I would personally like to thank all our sponsors, exhibitors, donors, and attendees for their continued support of NETSA. I would also like to thank our board members who worked so hard to make this event a success. Our Chairman Rich Tuttle and his committee do a fantastic job making this event function as smoothly as it does.

The **Golf Committee**, chaired by Bob Vacca, announced that the 2022 NETSA Scholarship Golf Tournament will be held September 28th. The registration form can be found on page 31, more information will be out soon.

The **Trade Show Committee**, chaired by Rich Tuttle, tells me that the 2023 NETSA Trade Show & Convention will be returning to Mohegan Sun on March 31st and April 1st, 2023. We will keep you posted.

The **Scholarship Committee**, chaired by Larry Lesieur has announce that NETSA will be awarding 21 scholarships this year. All the applications are in, and we are almost done with the selection process. Look for the 2022 Recipients in our September Road Runner. They are a very impressive group and well deserving of the honor. I am always impressed by the quality of the applicants and the difficulty of selecting the recipients and this year is no different. This is another reason to stay positive when you read these applications and realize we have some

exceptionally talented young adults ready to lead us in the future.

The **Legislative Committee** continues to monitor the matters that affect our industry in our State Legislatures across New England. In Maine, we are working with the Right to Repair group deciding if a Right to Repair campaign will be coming to **Maine**. If you are interested in becoming involved with this effort, please reach out to me at Tony@netsa.org.

I look forward to seeing you at the NETSA Scholarship Golf Tournament in September. Have a great summer. *Tony*



l-r: Tony DeSimone & Roy Littlefield IV.

2022 NETSA Golf Tournament

We are pleased to announce NETSA will hold the 2022 NETSA Scholarship Golf Tournament on **Wednesday, September 28, 2022** at the Shining Rock Golf Club in Northbridge Massachusetts.

Details will be sent out to all members soon. Remember ask a friend or two to join you for a round of golf. You do not have to be a good golfer to have some fun. Looking forward to seeing you, have a great summer and stay safe. - Bob Vacca



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June 6, 2022: There are now less than six work weeks before Congress leaves town for its month-long August recess. By the time the members return in September, the fervor of the midterms will be in full tilt and most legislative priorities will be sidelined.

Much to the chagrin of the Democratic leadership, crises and unexpected issues have dominated this year's legislative calendar and are expected to do so for much of the summer. While Congress did take something off its to-do list by successfully passing a Ukraine aid bill the week before last, the \$10 billion COVID funding bill that was negotiated back in April is still stalled over disputes surrounding the Title 42 border issue. There is also a renewed push in the Senate to pursue bi-partisan gun control legislation – an objective that has eluded the chamber for decades – in response to the tragic mass shootings in Uvalde and Buffalo. Further, the Senate still has a large backlog of nominees to confirm, which will be a priority for Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer (D-NY) given the razor thin majority that his party will be defending in November. Add to all this, the fact that Congress will need to pass a FY2023 budget or an extension by October 1 to avoid a government shutdown – and it becomes very clear that there simply aren't enough days, let alone legislative work days, for everything to get done.

From the privately owned and small business perspective, we continue to monitor two big pieces of legislation that could see movement this summer.

The first of these items is a yet to be negotiated new iteration of the "Build Back Better" legislation. It is clear that the version of Build Back Better (BBB) that was passed by the House late last year is dead and buried – primarily due to the opposition of Senators Joe Manchin (D-WV) and Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ). However, if common sense still holds sway with the Democrats, then there is still a chance that we will see a much smaller and cleaner reconciliation bill (probably not called anything like Build Back Better!) which will include only those provisions that Senators Manchin and Sinema support. [As you probably recall, when a bill is passed using the reconciliation process, only a majority vote is required because such budget bills cannot be filibustered.] If these two Senators are willing to back any new reconciliation legislation, then look for a few items such as the extension of the child tax credit and possibly universal pre-k, to be included. Once the process starts in earnest it should go quickly since basically there will be only two Senators writing it and that assumes that Senator Manchin doesn't pull back on the bill again.

Again, if common sense prevails, this bill will be short and sweet – with a relatively few items which can be easily explained to the public. Senator Manchin is facing pressure in his home state of West Virginia to renew funding for the Black Lung Disability Fund. This renewal was included in the House passed Build Back Better legislation and may be a bargaining chip that brings Senator Manchin back to the table to negotiate a new narrower version of the bill. He is on record saying that he wants to support some of the climate and energy tax credits, but also wants to include significant revenue raisers so that the bill will reduce the deficit. He also supports allowing Medicare to negotiate directly with the pharmaceutical companies to lower prescription drug prices. He said he'll support a corporate tax increase from 21% to 25%. Of course, Senator Sinema is on record against raising taxes. It will be interesting to see if the progressive arm of the Democrat party is willing to scuttle a more modest version of BBB because it will not include many of the items they want or whether they understand that half a loaf, even a quarter of a loaf is better than nothing.

There is a lot of pressure on the Democrats to pass something before the mid-terms – but whether they will be able to thread the needle amidst the various segments of their party to reach a compromise bill remains to be seen.

Also on the watch list for small business this summer is the SECURE Act 2.0, which passed the House by an overwhelming majority (414 to 5) at the end of March. The margin by which the bill passed the House certainly gives it momentum as it moves to the Senate – however, it is likely that, rather than passing the bill in its current form, the Senate will make changes or pass its own retirement plan bill and send the matter back to the House.

It seems strange that any retirement plan bill could pass so overwhelmingly in the House, particularly since from the small business perspective, it has a number of problems. Chalk this aberration up to claims that the bill will allow more people to invest for their retirement at larger contribution levels (larger contributions is hardly accurate) while the real cost to key employees of small businesses has been ignored.

Even though most of the major retirement plan groups in town are in favor of the House passed Secure Act 2.0, there are a number of proposals that are apt to cause privately owned and small businesses real problems. The bill would mandate new 401(k) plans to include auto-enrollment starting at 3% of pay and increasing each year up to at least 10%. This means that a participant would be automatically enrolled in the 401(k) plan and have 3% of his pay contributed to the plan in the first year, 4% in the second, until reaching 10% in the eighth year. Participants are allowed to opt out. The mandate will not apply to businesses with 10 or fewer employees or new businesses who have been in business for less than 3 years.

While auto-enrollment definitely increases participation in retirement plans, it also is difficult for small businesses to administer. Also of major concern is that the bill would force catch-up 401(k) contributions which are allowed for participants who are 50 or older to be after-tax, i.e., Roth contributions. It is likely that this change would cause many older participants to choose not to make catch-up contributions. A positive change in the House passed Secure Act 2.0 is that the age at which a

participant must start taking distributions from a retirement plan (the so-called Required Beginning Date) would move to age 73 starting this year, to age 74 starting in 2029 and to 75 as of 2032. It would also allow a plan to match a plan participant's payments towards a student loan, instead of only matching 401(k) contributions made by a participant.

Although the House was the first to pass its bill, the Senate has already been working on retirement plan legislation for some time. Last May, Senators Ben Cardin (D-Md.) and Rob Portman (R-Ohio) introduced the Retirement Security and Savings Act of 2021 (S.1770) which covers some of the same ground as Secure 2.0.


Additionally, last week, the Chair and Ranking Member of the Senate HELP Committee, Senators Patty Murray (D-WA) and Richard Burr (R-NC), released a discussion draft of what they've dubbed the "RISE & SHINE Act". The RISE & SHINE Act pulls together a number of stand-alone retirement plan bills into one package and is focused on those retirement plan proposals that are under the jurisdiction of the HELP Committee.

Senators Murray and Burr are currently soliciting feedback on their draft before it is formally introduced. The expectation is that ultimately the RISE & SHINE Act will be merged with the Retirement Security and Savings Act of 2021 and potentially some parts of Secure 2.0 to create a new Senate retirement plan bill. Again even though the time and bandwidth for Congress to act is short, given the strong bi-partisan push behind this issue, the odds of a bill being passed this year are still strong.

TIA will be closely monitoring the progress of this legislation and working to educate members about the retirement plan elements that are critical to small businesses and their owners and employees.

As we embark on yet another busy and contentious legislative season, we encourage our members to keep us apprised of the issues that they are tracking or concerned about.

TIA's Legislative Update is written by: Roy Littlefield IV, Director of Government Affairs, TIA Contact: 301.430.7280 ext. 137 rlittlefield2@tireindustry.org & Roy Littlefield, Government Affairs, TIA Contact: 301.430.7280 ext. 108 rlittlefield@tireindustry.org



NEW ENGLAND TIRE & SERVICE ASSOCIATION

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The 4 Stages of Business Growth

By Craig Van Batenberg

The Road Runner
Summer 2022



If you have been in this business for any length of time, most likely you have gone through some stages of growth. Businesses have a life of their own. They start small and grow up like kids do. Have you ever read your horoscope and it was right on the money? You wonder "How is that so?"

I was teaching a class in Minnesota recently and during my hybrid class I drifted away from the topic at hand and explained to the

group the stages that most businesses go through. Just like a child that you help raise, the stages are at times awe inspiring and there are times you just want to forget. Many shop owners approached me after that class and commented on how helpful it was to understand what had happened to their business and themselves over the years. I hit a nerve. That is always a great moment for an instructor. It happens now and again. My thoughts on this subject follow.

Stage one

If you started your own business there is a start-up stage, usually it will last about 5 years. It is exciting. You work your butt off. It is all you can do to go home. Weekends, no problem. Nights? Heck, eating dinner is optional. The company is growing and you are willing to do almost anything to keep it alive. If you get paid all the better, but many weeks all the money went right back into the company. Everything is a challenge, but that is what you wanted. Life is great, you are exhausted, but it is that good exhaustion. A job well done. Employees come and go and you learn how to manage someone else. You seldom wonder why you started your business. You are so busy running the shop, doing everything yourself, that you have no time to wonder about things like, who am I? Is this really what I want to do? Oh, the newness of it all!

Stage two

Your business is now somewhere between 5 and 10 years old. You might be married and the kids need a dad or mom at home. You have learned how to make money. You might have considered joining a trade association by now. The business is starting to mature. The hours are set, policies are not changed every week. It looks like a business, it smells like a business, you talk like a business man or woman. It is a business! You are making money. You actually get paid every week. The overhead is high but making the payments can be done if you have a plan and work it. Things usually go well for another 5 years. Life is good with a very positive outlook. You live in the future a lot when it comes to "why do I do this?". You are getting almost into a routine. You are smarter, older, wiser and feel pretty good about all the hard work. It is paying off and looks to get even better. Dreams are fading as reality sets in, but there is still hope.

Stage three

Years 10 to 15. This is a time when the business comes into it's own. Money is no longer a problem. You have procedures and policies. These were made based on your past problems and poor decisions. You have

learned how to delegate, although you really can't let go completely. The business is not your only interest. Life outside the shop is really important to you. Problems with the business that take your time away from other parts of your life are starting to bother you. Resentment is building. If you have done a reasonably good job the first 10 years, life can now start to offer more than a paycheck. As you approach the 15 year mark, a critical part of your life is in front of you, "what do I do with the rest of my life?" You realize that you are no longer young. Your family is really important to you and some tough decisions must be made. "What do I do with my free time?" "Is golf all there is?" You may get more involved with your family or church. You might buy another business and start over again, leaving someone else to run the shop. You might just resign yourself to this and say, "I guess this is all I will ever be". That can be a bad road to go down. Your life can actually get very depressing and you can feel very lost. These shop owners are unhappy, angry, cynical people. There is very little joy in their life. They might drop out of the local trade association, if they were ever a member. It is this stage where decisions are more critical than at any other time.

Stage four

Some will never make it here, but others do. Some shop owners get stuck in one of the three stages mentioned earlier. This can be the best or worse time of your business life. This is when you get to do what you want, when you want, on your own terms. This is when we won't put up with the whiners and complainers any more. Life takes on a new meaning. You may call this your businesses mid-life crisis. What you end up doing no longer benefits just you. It is more about family, community and your industry. It is when all the parts of your life can come together and they all fit. When ethics, disciplines, your values and the world can all co-exist.



The Cycle Repeats

If your shop is over 15 years old and you feel stuck, join your trade association board, take in a foster kid, raise money for your favorite charity, learn how to play the trombone. How about a long vacation on a sailboat like Ed Ormston from Hyannis Brake and Auto while he was running his shop. Want to make more money? Have more fun doing it. This cycle repeats itself every 15 years.



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The Importance of Digital Retail

With consumers keeping their cars longer, new car inventory at an all-time low, and EVs going mainstream,

dealers are realizing the importance of marketing and software that helps them sell more tires. Tires keep your customers coming back, increasing car count in the service drive and up-sell opportunities.

eCommerce is no longer a novel shopping experience, but rather preferred and expected by many customers. 83% of consumers shop for tires online,¹ but end up purchasing in-store because pricing and online purchase functionality aren't available from local dealers. With e-commerce software, consumers can shop wherever and whenever they want. In fact, 42% of tire purchases are made outside of normal business hours². Consumers want to read reviews, compare prices, buy tires and schedule service from the convenience of their home. Offering flexible shopping increases your chance of capturing the sale.

Not only does digital retail provide consumers an easy way to shop online, it also enables a streamlined process for shops to sell tires, which includes tools to view inventory, compare competitive pricing, and respond to customers quickly. Tires are a key factor in retaining a customer. The lifetime value of a customer is approximately \$2K, and 80% of consumers service their car where they purchase tires³. If you don't reach the customer where they're shopping, you'll lose out to large online retailers.

How to be Successful with a Digital Marketing Strategy

Make it as easy as possible for shoppers to find you. A strong website with clear 'calls to action' and high-performing SEO, combined with an optimized Google My Business profile is the first

step to success. Google can be an equalizer for smaller independent shops to compete with the large national chains.

Digital advertising is the most cost effective way to reach your target audience, ensuring you're bringing the right consumers to your business. Get your tire inventory on the front page of Google when shoppers search "tires near me". Google Shopping Local listings puts your exact tire inventory in front of an in-market shopper looking to buy tires.

The tire industry has converged with the world of online sales and dealers need to adapt to this new landscape. Utilizing digital retail software and marketing platforms will help you grow sales and improve customer satisfaction in this changing environment. Don't just be an installer for large online retailers, meet the customer where they are, and win their business and trust. You'll be more profitable doing so.

¹ Bridgestone

² TireTutor internal data

³ TireTutor internal data (net present value of a consumer); Bridgestone

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Tires Market Report



Data reveals key differences among regional markets

When GfK released the first weekly regional sell-out data from its nationwide POS panel of independent retailers, we found extraordinary disparities between the regions, with different levels of growth and sales. In 2021, the Middle Atlantic states led in both sales and unit growth, with a 19% rise in revenue. These new analyses could unlock new potential in your business, too -- scroll down to learn more!

Key Findings from March 2022

GfK's monthly sales data for the independent tires channel demonstrates a nearly 15% decline in units while year-to-date is down only 6.5%.

Independent Tire Channel	March 2022 - Monthly			March 2022 - YTD		
	Unit Share change v 2021	Performance - % change		Average Price	Performance - % change	
	Unit Share change v 2021	Units v 2021	Dollars v 2021	Average Price	Units v 2021	Dollars v 2021
Total PLT Tires	0.0	-14.9	-4.5	151	-6.5	4.1
Non-LT*	-2.3	-17.3	-6.1	138	-8.3	3.2
LT	2.3	-4.6	0.4	202	1.3	6.6
18"+ RD	0.2	-14.5	-3.5	193	-5.7	5.5
Non-LT* 18"+	0.4	-13.8	-2.6	178	-5.0	6.6
LT 18"+	-0.3	-18.9	-7.0	273	-10.0	1.2
UHP Speeds	0.1	-13.6	-1.4	154	-3.3	7.8
Run Flat Tire	0.0	-17.5	-6.4	241	-9.0	3.0
Tier 1	-0.3	-16.0	-4.5	186	-2.4	9.9
Tier 2	-4.4	-23.4	-12.0	166	-15.8	-4.8
Tier 3	-2.1	-25.4	-11.2	119	-18.2	-4.9
Tier 4/Other Brands	6.9	20.8	41.7	92	29.1	47.9

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



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GfK Tire Panel News

GfK's growing retail panel delivers greater geographic granularity and better comparisons on price, volume, and market share within Census Division regions.

Independent Tire Channel	March 2022 - Monthly			March 2022 - YTD		
	Unit: Share change v 2021	Performance - % change		Average Price	Performance - % change	
		Units v 2021	Dollars v 2021		Units v 2021	Dollars v 2021
Total PLT Tires	0.0	-14.9	-4.5	151	-6.5	4.1
East North Central	0.7	-10.7	0.0	138	-0.5	11.2
East South Central	-0.5	-23.7	-15.6	148	-11.2	-3.3
Middle Atlantic	0.0	-15.0	-3.2	153	0.2	13.8
Mountain	0.2	-12.1	1.7	163	-12.2	-0.7
New England	0.2	-9.4	3.1	140	2.9	16.1
Pacific	0.2	-13.7	-5.1	147	-8.1	-0.1
South Atlantic	-0.6	-17.8	-10.7	148	-12.8	-5.5
West North Central	0.2	-12.7	-1.3	156	-7.1	4.7
West South Central	-0.4	-17.1	-4.3	161	-6.7	6.0

To learn more, or access to our Weekly/Regional tire sales data, contact Neil.Portnoy@GfK.com.



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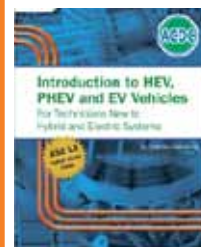
Well, hello there! This is my last News from New Hampshire column for the Roadrunner as I am stepping down from the NETSA board after 25 years. The time just seems to be right for a few reasons. First, I really like the new Executive Board and our current Board of Directors. There are major decisions that need to be made down the road about our future as an association including the trade show and

scholarship programs. I have a lot of faith that your board will make the right choices. Second, I do not like my current state of mind right now and feel that I can no longer contribute to NETSA in the same positive way that I have in the past. The last seven years have been very difficult ones starting with my mother and father both getting sick and dying, then the Covid pandemic hit, and now the continuing chaos out there with the war in Ukraine, constant mass shootings, and economic upheaval. I hope that we have a member or members that might be willing to write a column to take my place who can relate more to running a shop with both tires and mechanical work, just like Spencer Carruthers from Kenwood Tire used to write in the Roadrunner a few years ago. I loved the frankness, honesty, and humor that he shared when he wrote his column and have missed his column very much since. We need those kinds of articles again. I don't want to bore you to death with a bunch of names, but you don't stay on a board of directors for 25 years unless you believe in what your association is doing and like the people you serve with. And if you start mentioning names, there will be a lot of people I leave out. Nevertheless, I want to thank some of our trade show helpers over the years, particularly Rich and Betsy Tuttle, Blaise, Sally, and Frank Pascale, Dale Franklin, Steve Dupoise, Steve McGrath, Jack and Cindy Kelley, Tom Ferguson, Pam LaFleur, and all those others who helped us out over the years. One of the best decisions we ever made was to move the show to Mohegan Sun casino, a high risk, high reward decision made by our then board of directors. The show would have died by now if we didn't take the chance and go big, plus moving the show from Saturday/Sunday to Friday/Saturday. We had to go somewhere where spouses would enjoy going and still give people their Sunday off. It worked. We were fortunate that our then executive director Dick Cole worked well with the Mohegan Sun staff and was able to get us in there on a weekend. Trade shows were a weekday thing back then because the casinos were full on the weekends and didn't need shows like ours to fill the rooms at that time. We stayed at Mohegan for years, then Foxwoods, and it never ceased to amaze me that which ever one we went to, people told me how they wished we were at the other casino while I was getting blown around the vendor staging area parking lots outdoors! Another great idea was to create a Hall of Fame dinner where we could recognize our own and auction items off to benefit our scholarships. Jim Melvin came up with the idea and we made it work. I also think he and some other board members came up with the idea of having golf sponsorships benefit our scholarship fund. That plus the auction of items at the golf luncheon have helped NETSA match our private donations and reward a lot of deserving students connected with NETSA members. When I joined, I think the Richardson Group was doing two \$500 scholarships and that was it. As we got more

members to give scholarships, we had several thousand-dollar scholarships. The idea came up one year to match the \$1,000 private donations and make them \$2,000 scholarships. The board debated making the change for over an hour with good arguments on both sides. Once again, our board made the right decision and the NETSA scholarship program has flourished since. Scholarship sponsors loved having their donations matched, and we have given away around 21 \$2,000 scholarships the past few years. We probably won't be able to sustain this pace at some point, but NETSA has awarded well over a quarter million dollars in scholarships so far due to the support of our dealer members and suppliers. One of the best decisions made during my time on the board was to add a lot of our key suppliers to the board. When I joined, most of our board was independent dealers. Suppliers couldn't even be president of the NETSA board. They were almost viewed as the enemy by some dealers. My feeling was that we should encourage suppliers to be on the board and contribute their ideas to our success. Along with Tony Koles, Jack Kelley, and Dick Cole, we came up with new workable NETSA bylaws that we have only changed slightly 20 years later and eliminated the requirement that our president be a tire dealer. Several suppliers have served as our president since and have all done a great job. Rich Tuttle (our longtime VP) reminds me often that I got him to join the NETSA board as a supplier. Sorry about that, but thanks for all your help over the years, especially for being long time chair of the trade show. I started on our board as secretary, then treasurer, then VP, and finally president for 2 years, taking over for my father, also a long-time board member. Thankfully, many of us past NETSA presidents have stayed on the board well after their tenure was over. I think it's because we all enjoyed being involved in the automotive and tire business. Right now, Katie, our new president is a past NETSA scholarship recipient, and a supplier member employed by Mohawk Rubber. We have had lots of support from suppliers over the years, but consistently I can say that Mohawk Rubber and Sullivan Tire have been amongst our biggest boosters at both our trade show and our scholarship programs. I think that it is because they treat their help like family and value the positive things that NETSA does and what we stand for in our automotive community. Thanks to them and all

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the vendors at our trade shows over the years as well as those who have contributed to our scholarship programs in one way or another.

And so ends the tenure of a Lesieur family member on the NETSA board for probably over 50 years now. I think my grandfather was on the board for a while and my father Roland (pictured below) certainly was active on the board as long-time treasurer (me too) and wrote a very spirited column for the Roadrunner for many, many years. Time certainly does fly! Thanks to all of you who I have gotten to know these past 25 years. In those years, we have had only three executive directors and I thank them all for their dedication and service to our association. I think it shows how stable we have been during that time. Tony DeSimone took the reigns over as executive director from "coach" Dick Cole many years ago now and has been a steady hand running our day-to-day activities. We have been very fortunate. As for me, I don't know what my long-term future holds while we figure out what to do with our business and I sort out some various health issues that have been weighing me down lately. I guess I'm still



on the journey of life and haven't figured out my destination yet. But I can say that being heavily involved with NETSA has been one of the highlights of my life, mostly because I got to work alongside some great people like you. Thank you for that. My wish for all our members is that you and your families enjoy great happiness, health, and prosperity! Best regards and as Barry Steinberg used to say all the time, "Be well!"

Larry

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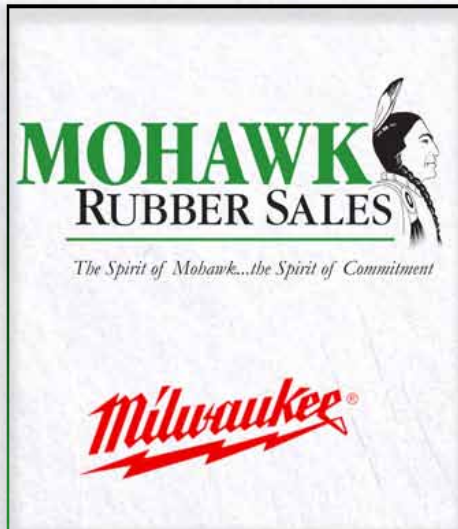
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When People Wish They had Dental Benefits

Contributor: Charlie Muise

The Road Runner
Summer 2022

Most people make choices they wish they could change, especially when it involves their health. They spend an hour (or two) playing games on their digital devices, and later think they should have spent the time exercising. Or they eat too many fried foods and forget to add salad, fruit or vegetables.

It's the same for dental care. Many people spend a few minutes brushing but don't use floss to clean between and around their teeth first. They assume their oral health is



good and decide not to get dental insurance until something happens. Review six times when people wish they had dental insurance benefits.

- 1. You experience an unexpected dental problem.** Life is full of uncertainties, and so is your oral health. For example, when biting on ice, you may crack a tooth. Or when chewing on hard or sticky candy, you may dislodge a filling. And if you don't floss once and brush twice each day, you can develop tooth decay. People with dental insurance tend to schedule annual dental appointments for an exam and professional cleaning. During these visits, the dentist will check for oral health concerns that need to be fixed, or could lead to problems in the future. The dentist also will look for signs of medical conditions that could turn into serious health problems.
- 2. A medical treatment or prescription adversely impacts your oral health.** Treatments for medical conditions, such as those requiring chemotherapy, can affect oral health. Some prescription or over-the-counter medications can reduce saliva, causing dry mouth (and bad breath), which increases the risk for tooth decay. With dental insurance, members can schedule yearly appointments to have their oral health checked by a professional to ensure they don't develop problems with their teeth or gums.
- 3. Your kids need dental care.** Kids' teeth develop in different stages. Their teeth may come in crooked, causing smile and bite problems. Or, kids may have a small mouth, so there isn't enough room for all their teeth. These needs could be covered if you had a family dental plan with child orthodontia benefits through your employer. Or you could have an individual or family dental plan that you purchased online. With dental benefits, you can schedule regular exams and cleanings for your kids. These appointments help the dentist monitor the development of your kids' teeth and repair tooth decay before it gets bad. If kids need braces to fix crooked teeth or bite problems, these often can be corrected in the teenage years with orthodontia benefits.
- 4. You opted out of employer-sponsored dental benefits.** If your smile looks great and your teeth don't hurt, it's easy to think you don't need dental insurance. After all, why go to the dentist when you don't have a reason for the visit? So you decide not to sign up for employer-sponsored dental insurance. Or if you didn't qualify for these benefits, you didn't ask your employer for a recommendation in purchasing individual dental coverage online from a reputable carrier. As you can imagine, oral

health issues can lead to costly dental repairs. The monthly cost for a dental plan is minimal compared to what it costs for major dental procedures such as root canals and crowns. Consider it an investment in your overall health. Dental insurance also can save you money. Most plans cover preventive dental exams at 100%. Seeing the dentist regularly means oral health problems can be caught early before expensive treatments are needed.

- 5. You are self-employed or semi-retired and put off getting dental benefits.** Many people today work as self-employed contractors or gig workers. Or they may be semi-retired. If this describes your situation, you may decide to get only medical insurance, thinking you'll cover any dental expenses out of pocket. However, medical coverage isn't enough. Medical plans do not cover the cost of dental services such as preventive exams each year, fillings, crowns or root canals. But an individual dental plan can keep your teeth and gums healthy, reducing the likelihood of costly dental care.
- 6. You're no longer on your parents' plan and didn't get dental coverage.** If you're on your parents' dental plan, you'll need to get your own coverage when you turn 26. However, due to budget concerns, you may decide not to get dental insurance either through your employer or online. Under your parents' coverage, you probably scheduled regular dental exams and professional cleanings to keep your teeth and gums healthy. So, don't stop now. The monthly cost for dental insurance is worth it. You just need to find a plan that meets your needs. Investing in dental insurance will help you maintain your oral health throughout life. And you'll avoid expensive dental care in the future.

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Proactive Customer Service

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

The Road Runner
Summer 2022



Everyone aims to deliver proactive customer service. Whether you refer to it as cross-selling, up-selling, suggestive selling, or – as we like to say — “soft question” selling, a **basic component of effective customer service is to offer your customers additional choices.** Some customer service representatives might fear being perceived as pushy or assuming. No one wants to offend the customer. To successfully ask the

soft question, you need to know the right technique.

The key is to remember to ask if your customer has any need for other products or services your company offers and that they might not have heard about. These can be free services that your company is promoting, they might be products that are on sale or anything else that naturally ties in with what the customer already is using or ordering. Think about how you liked it when someone told you about an offering which compliments another product you'd been eyeing.

Here's how it's done: Offer your client products or services they could use. **If you don't suggest or offer these helpful ideas, you're actually denying them something they might need. So don't deny them a choice.** That's critical in being proactive.

These are some examples of soft questions:

- “By the way, are you aware of our free overnight shipping policy if we make a mistake on your order?”
- I noticed that you bought socks the last time you ordered shoes. We have a buy-two-get-one-free sale on socks. Do you need any more?”
- “Would you be interested in taking advantage of our sale on knit Polo shirts?”
- “Were you aware of our VIP plan? It allows business travelers to upgrade to the concierge level for only \$50 additional per day.”
- “Have you seen the cute matching jacket? It's also on sale this week.”
- “Did you know we now offer an identity protection plan on checking accounts? It's only \$2.95 per month.”
- “Oh, by the way, were you aware of our free, online bill paying service?”

Soft questions are seldom rejected. If people need the services, they'll give you a positive response. And if they don't need it, they'll give you a soft turndown to your soft question.

That's one of the best things about asking soft questions: you won't feel rejected. But the important thing to remember is that when you ask the soft question, you are not denying your caller the choice of having access to a product or service they could benefit from.

Want to improve the level of service you deliver? Don't deny your customer a choice.

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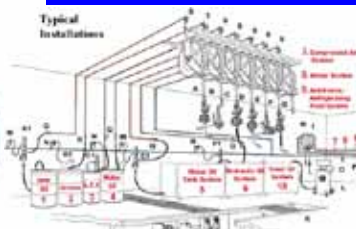
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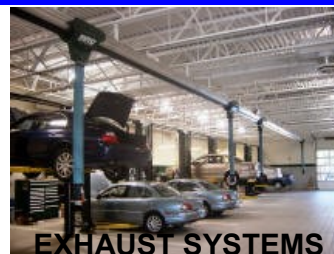
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Waived For	Preventive & Orthodontia	Preventive & Orthodontia
Charges covered for you (co-insurance)	Tier 1	Tier 2
Preventive Care	100%	100%
Basic Care	90%	80%
Major Care	50%	50%
Orthodontia	50%	50%
Annual Maximum Benefit	\$1750	\$1500
	Combined Tier 1 and Tier 2 maximum of \$1500 with an additional \$250 of benefit for Tier 1	
Maximum Rollover	Yes (applies to all levels)	
Rollover Threshold	\$700	
Rollover Amount	\$350	
Rollover Amount	\$500	
Rollover Account Limit	\$1250	
Lifetime Orthodontia Maximum	\$1000 (applies to all levels)	
Dependent Age Limits	26 (exclude Ortho) 19 (applies to Ortho)	
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April 22's Interchange Rate Changes

By Eric Cohen, CEO, Merchant Advocate

The Road Runner
Summer 2022



Everything Business Owners Need to Know: latest information on the biggest round of changes since the Covid-19 pandemic

Credit card processors and card-issuing banks accrued some goodwill in 2020 when they asserted that they would not raise interchange rates or other fees during the height of the pandemic. Now, as merchants strive to make their financial comebacks, Visa and Mastercard continue to maintain that they are on the side of businesses—but this is not truly the case.

Both Visa and Mastercard have overhauled their interchange rates in April 2022 in nuanced ways. Though positioned as positive for merchants, the updates come with seemingly contradictory terms and penalties that affect certain cards and billing categories, as well as dependencies on the type of transaction an enterprise provides for its customers. It's crucial to focus on these variables to find out how they affect your business.

The first thing to consider is the overabundance of card types available today. Over the past few years, there has been an explosion in the amount of card types, special rewards programs, business cards, and commercial cards. There are all these different offers out there that promise to increase rewards or boost cash back. And the type of card that your business is taking will ultimately determine whether you have a rate increase or not. Overall, it looks like there will be anywhere from a 5-20% basis point increase depending on the type of business and type of card taken.

Some other factors that the credit card issuers took under consideration when raising rates were fraud and security, encouraging businesses to espouse "tokenization" to mitigate risk. Tokenizing refers to the encryption of retained customer data that allows for faster payment processing—especially crucial if the payment is taken without the card or client physically present. Tokenizing repeat customers helps deem them as trustworthy credit card users who pose a diminished fraud risk for issuing banks.

To that end, Visa's most significant April 2022 update was the addition of the "token" category, increasing e-commerce and hand-keyed transactions rates by 5%—basically an increase for all card-not-present environments. The idea is to incentivize merchants into using a card vault or another billing tool, to update how they receive payments. The result is a lowered transaction rate of 1.8%, negating this year's increase to 1.89%.

Updating your credit card payment system to provide tokenization is not automatic. Businesses have to talk to their processors, gateways, or communication devices; it's very important for someone to make sure their transactions are tokenized. Do you know if your businesses transactions

are tokenized and secure? If you don't have that answer, it's time to find a credit-card processing expert to advocate on your behalf, such as Merchant Advocate.

Perhaps the most controversial new rollout is Visa's doubling of penalties for not processing key transactions correctly. A full percentage point higher, the penalty is close to 1% of the gross sale, on top of the normal rates, which range from 2-3%. That's significant, signaling a possible 4% - 5% decrease of a business's net profit!

For this reason, it is very important to review your statements every month. Or you can partner with have a monthly monitoring service to go over every line item, making sure that you are not being overcharged. Merchant Advocate has built a proprietary technology to do just that: An IP that will help businesses double-check every line item, make sure the math is right, check the coding, see what the penalties are, see what your increases are. Your analyst will help you digest this information, then fix things accordingly.

Meanwhile, Mastercard has now imposed approximately a 3% increase for businesses that fall under the consumer and commercial interchange category—a classification that includes everything from supermarkets to travel agencies and car rentals. Mastercard has also hiked fees for all transactions made virtually or over the phone, but unlike Visa's pass for tokenized vendors, MC's increases hit across the board, not taking into account businesses' security status.

Another tip? Make sure your business is coded properly to take advantage of the few decreases on special rewards cards that Mastercard is offering. What Merchant Advocate can do is make sure to double-check that the interchange coming across is accurate, the business is coded properly, and if a vendor is available for decreases, make sure those go into play.

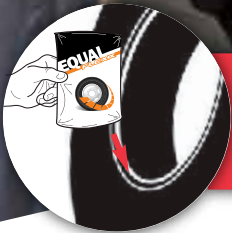
Finally, it's important to keep in mind where credit-card processors fit into all of this. As usual, they are taking advantage of the complications, and are primarily focused on retaining their profit margins by hiking up their own fees by half a percent or more. Make sure to stay educated and have an advocate in your corner.

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We've all witnessed the explosion of social media, especially over the last couple years. While social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn began as platforms to share content and maintain digital connections to friends and family, they evolved into avenues to grow your business.

The majority of consumers turn to the internet to shop for new auto parts, tires or repair services. Most businesses have learned to anticipate the digital starting point of the buying journey and have boosted their website presence in response. However, shoppers aren't just googling for automotive services – they're also using social media to find answers. And Instagram is one of their top resources.

The Rise of Instagram

While most small- to mid-sized businesses have a website and Facebook page, not nearly as many have embraced Instagram. The photo-sharing application launched in 2010 and was adopted by 25,000 users on its first day, reaching 1 million in under three months. Today, 1 billion people use Instagram every month.

Instagram is now a faster-growing platform than Facebook, though its audience is mainly comprised of younger users – millennials and Gen Z. Hootsuite's Global State of Digital 2022 Report shows that more than 60% of the user base is between the ages of 18 and 34. (For reference, Facebook's largest age group is 35 to 44). Instagram's younger user base makes it a powerful avenue for automotive businesses to connect with the next generation of consumers. Instagram has an easy-to-use interface that creates a visual brand for your business, promoting trust, transparency and engagement with your audience.

In today's digital age, it's important to be able to connect with potential shoppers online. While many younger buyers aren't experienced in vehicle repairs and maintenance, they are very savvy in using the internet to find answers. In fact, 50% of people use Instagram as a search tool to discover new brands, services and products. But that's not all – 44% use Instagram weekly to shop and make purchases, as reported by Hootsuite.

Instagram Best Practices

In this article, we're going to hone in on tips for Instagram.

Sizing Requirements

Instagram is a photo-centric platform, so graphics need to be top-tier quality. Correctly sizing your images ensures your visuals will be properly centered and appealing. Here are the recommended image sizes:

- Width of 1080 pixels (if the image is over 1080 pixels, Instagram will size it down)

- Height between 566 - 1350 pixels (depending on whether the image is landscape or portrait)

Character Limits

While Instagram captions allow up to 2,200 characters (and you'll often see users posting long captions), businesses are encouraged to restrict posts to 125 or fewer characters, especially on advertisements. Your audience is conditioned to scroll through Instagram, often idly, and longer captions are less likely to hold their attention.

For example, let's say that Bob's Wheels is throwing a summer barbecue to demo their new wheel lines. Here's what an optimal Instagram caption could look like:

Come BBQ with @bobswheels 7/9 2-4PM \$9 per guest - all you can eat! Grab a plate and demo our new wheels. Call for details.

The post is informative but to the point and delivers all the need-to-know information up front. If you need to apply a longer caption, we encourage you to either include the crucial information in the first line or write an attention-grabbing intro that compels the audience to pause and click on the post to read the rest of the message.

Hashtags

Hashtags (#) are used to index keywords so users can easily follow topics that interest them. Plugging in a hashtag links your post to any other Instagram post featuring the same hashtag(s). Some industry-specific hashtags you might use to draw in shoppers could include:

- #autoshop**
- #automotiverepair**
- #tireandwheel**

Is there a such thing as too many hashtags? Yes, but it's not as restrictive as you might think. While Facebook posts should be limited to 1-2 hashtags, Instagram posts can feature up to 30! This doesn't mean you should stuff your caption full of as many hashtags as you can think up. Hashtag use should be intentional and relevant to your post. Here are two ways to feature more hashtags:

- Incorporate them into your copy. Is your car's #airconditioning ready for summer? Stop by today for an #autotuneup!
- Group hashtags at the base of your post, where they won't bog down your message. You may see other posters include their hashtags several lines below the main message – this earns them all the benefits of keyword indexing without overshadowing the actual post.

The bottom line of Instagram is that if you aren't using it to connect with potential customers and enhance your brand, you could be missing out on quality sales leads and leaving money on the table. You may have concerns about finding the time to commit to another social media platform, and we encourage you to reach out if you find yourself in need of social media support.



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Customer Value: The New Metric Driving Smart Tire Dealerships

At a time when tire dealers face so many obstacles to maintaining sales share, they need to tap into every advantage they can find. This is where data analytics plays such a key role - not just knowing how many tires a dealer sold or how many oil changes were performed last month, but going deeper to allocate more marketing dollars against high-value customers.



When we think about differentiating high-value from low-value customers four principles come to mind:

- Not all customers are the same
- Not all customers deliver the same value
- Not all stores within a chain deliver the same value
- Different customers require different approaches (this one's my favorite)

Game-changing information for tire dealers

The reason these principles hold true is because the types of customers who live around each tire shop are different. Some shops have a higher density of high-value customers than others. The key is to understand the types of customers and the types of vehicles near your shops. This can be game-changing information.

Tire dealers who believe in these principles may also need to reconsider their approach to marketing - transitioning from classic mass marketing to data-driven target marketing. The goal is simple but also profound: To re-allocate marketing funds from low-value to high-value customers, successfully delivering more Tier-1 tire buyers to shops and at the same time reducing the number of OPP (opening price point) buyers. The outcome would be more revenue and margin dollars to the business.

The 80/20 rule

The Pareto Principle maintains that 80% of revenue is derived from 20% of customers. The exact ratio varies, of course, but the insight that a small percentage of customers contribute a disproportionate amount of revenue is widely accepted. But how often are we able to act on this knowledge - marketing directly to the customers who are driving our businesses, and identifying those who have the potential to become "super-spenders"?

Think about the shortage of technicians in the tire industry. With talent

so hard to come by, dealers cannot afford to have their best technicians working on "low-value" vehicles - those that need only routine, minimal-cost work.

To maximize profit, they need to keep their teams busy with "high-value" vehicles that deliver higher margins. But how can sellers distinguish between low- and high-value customers and act on that knowledge in real time?

Finding (and targeting) your high-value tire customers

GfK has been working with several tire sellers to take on this hugely important challenge. Dealers who share their sell-out information with GfK allow us to analyze their data by a consistent set of vehicle segments, allowing us to differentiate between high- and low-value customers and understand which vehicle segments deliver the most value to the shop. For example, when a full-size pickup rolls into the dealer's bay to buy tires, the average spend is \$1,250 (for the sellers measured by GfK). Compare this to a small SUV, where the average tire spend is \$560, or to a small entry car, with an average spend of just \$273. This means that a dealer needs to sell tires to five entry cars to match the revenue from one full-size pickup.

It seems obvious that the dealer would want to bring as many full-size pickups through its doors as possible. But how many sellers can actually make this happen - analyzing their data to identify high-value vehicle owners and then marketing to them with special offers or other engagement drivers?

We can create high- versus low-value scenarios for a host of different attributes - rim sizes, model years, car features and even owner ZIP codes. The key factor is the ability to target, zeroing in on the customers who are generating the most revenue and profit for your shops, as well as those who have the potential to become high value.

Competing against big-box stores and dealerships

This approach is only new to tire dealers. Competitors in other channels long ago figured out how to target high-value customers. Reaching these buyers with the right offers and elevating revenue and efficiency is simply the way smart retailers do business every day.

The tire industry needs to borrow a page from their playbook and actively compete for high-margin car owners. After all, we are tire experts and can deliver a better experience to the customer than any other competitor - so why not get paid more for it?

Neil Portnoy is managing director of GfK's POS Tracking team focusing on the U.S. tire industry. GfK maintains the only nationwide panel tracking sell-out data in the independent tire channel. Contact Neil at Neil.Portnoy@gfk.com.

This article originally appeared in Today's Tire Industry, published by the Tire Industry Association. Watch our new On Demand webinar, Attracting High-Value Tire Service Customers, for deeper insight into the strategies on customer value.

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American Tire Distributors to Acquire Monro, Inc.'s Tires Now Distribution Assets

HUNTERSVILLE, N.C. and ROCHESTER, N.Y. – May 19, 2022 – American Tire Distributors (“ATD”) and Monro, Inc. (Nasdaq: MNRO) (“Monro”), today announced that they have entered into a definitive agreement pursuant to which ATD will acquire Monro’s wholesale tire distribution assets, operating under the Tires Now name (“Tires Now”).

Tires Now operates seven facilities across the Southeastern United States, servicing more than 3,500 wholesale customer locations annually. In addition to servicing these wholesale customers, with this transaction, ATD will also strengthen its strategic support of the tire business at Monro’s more than 1,300 retail stores. Both Monro and ATD, as well as their respective partners and customers, are expected to benefit from increased operational efficiencies created through this transaction.

“With the addition of Tires Now, we are taking another important step in ATD’s transformation journey,” said Stuart Schuette, President and Chief Executive Officer of ATD. “We are adding volume and geographic reach that will make us an even stronger supply chain partner to our customers and the manufacturers with which we work. We also view this as a win for the tire supply chain network and a step forward for both ATD’s and Monro’s commitments to sustainability. This transaction will support ATD’s ESG and current emissions efficiency initiatives, and together with Tires Now, we will be able to better reduce overall emissions. This is a truly unique opportunity, and we look forward to working closely with Monro, as well as our other customers, to provide our full platform of ATD’s logistics services.”

Mr. Schuette continued, “We have great admiration for the teammates of Tires Now, and we could not be more excited about growing the ATD family. Together, we will serve even more retail locations with even more logistics services and we will continue to lead the pace of change in our industry.”

Myers Industries acquires aftermarket distributor Mohawk

AKRON, 2022 — Myers Industries Inc. has strengthened its distribution segment, acquiring the assets of automotive aftermarket distributor Mohawk Rubber Sales of New England Inc., including four distribution centers. Myers, a polymer manufacturer as well as a distributor of tire shop supplies and equipment, said it has financed the deal with its revolving credit facility, but did not release other financial terms.

The acquisition brings additional scale and synergy to Myers, according to company executives, and the new D/Cs will bolster its supply chain. Founded in 1932, Hingham, Mass.-based Mohawk Rubber Sales distributes tire-repair, retreading and related supplies across traditional and online channels. Myers will now operate Mohawk’s four distribution centers, in Alpharetta, Ga.; Salt Lake City; Houston; and Hingham.

Mohawk Rubber Owner Brian McGeoghegan said Myers’ culture and values align with Mohawk’s. “We’ve long admired Myers Tire Supply and its leading position in the tire repair and retread market and believe that Mike and his senior leadership team have repositioned the business for long-term success,” McGeoghegan said.

“We bring complimentary assets and services, which will help both of our

businesses achieve scale and efficiencies.” Paul Johnson, vice president of Myers’ distribution segment, said the combined companies “will bring even better service solutions, support and value to our customers,” creating “the largest, most experienced field and customer service teams in the tire supplies and repair industry.

“We believe we’ll be in an even better position to help our customers, large and small, win in their markets, every day.”

Sullivan Tire Acquires C&R Tire

WORCESTER, MA , April 2022 - C&R Tire owner Jim Chew will join the Sullivan Tire team, as well as most of the company’s current staff.

“I’m thrilled to become part of the Sullivan Tire team,” he said. “I’ve been doing business with Sullivan Tire for years and going from one family business to another is a natural fit for C&R Tire. I know both our retail and wholesale customers will be served well with this transition.”

C&R Tire has a 15-bay store location at 111 Randolph Road in Worcester. The 25,000-square-foot store also has warehousing space. The Sturbridge location at 649 Main Street is 9,600 square feet with seven service bays and a car wash.

“We are excited and honored to welcome C&R Tire to the Sullivan Tire family, and look forward to continuing the great customer service they have provided to both their retail and wholesale customers for more than 75 years,” said Sullivan Tire Vice President of Marketing Paul Sullivan.

Sullivan Tire says it plans to renovate both C&R Tire locations. Both will remain open during renovations.

TireTutor builds new, modern wholesale ordering platform for Tony’s Tires & Wheels

BOSTON, Mass., April 1, 2022 – Tony’s Tires & Wheels Inc., one of the fastest-growing independent tire distributors in the Northeast has recently launched its new, modern and efficient wholesale website. The platform is powered by TireTutor, an automotive SaaS company that provides revolutionary digital retail software to tire distributors and dealers.

“We chose TireTutor to power our new wholesale website because their software makes the ordering process easier and faster, while providing new, innovative features,” said Alex German, President of Tony’s Tires and Wheels. “We want to give our dealers the best ordering experience we can and TireTutor has made this possible.”

The TireTutor software offers a streamlined wholesale ordering experience and digital retail quoting capabilities. As a tech-first company, TireTutor has built simple yet effective software for distributors to provide to their dealers.

“With consumers keeping their cars longer, new car inventory at an all-time low, and EVs going mainstream, dealers are realizing the importance of software that helps them sell more tires. At TireTutor, we’re a technology company focused exclusively on this vertical,” said Jason Abrahams, Founder and CEO of TireTutor. “Our focus is to make the ordering and purchasing process throughout the value chain as simple as possible, while providing features that improve productivity and margin.”

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