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NETWORKING IN 2023



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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

CONNECTING TO THE "NEW, NEW NORMAL"

he phrase "The New Normal" was something most of us heard quite a lot, especially as COVID took full hold of the world in 2020/2021. It meant a number of different things, but generally referred to virtually everyone working from home and not going out into the world, or interacting with others face-to-face. Thankfully last year, the grip the pandemic had on the world loosened and we all started getting back to some semblance of our prior activities. However, there were still challenges and oddities. For example, Work Truck Week and NADA occurred simultaneously in March, which presented issues for those wanting to go to both shows. Additionally, supply chain challenges persisted - and still continue today -

meaning all of us in the work truck and van arena had to find new ways of taking care of our customers.

No longer could business buvers come onto our lot, walk around and find the work vehicle they needed. Instead, we had to help them understand that pre-orders were the way. And, that also meant assisting them with planning out commercial vehicle needs, which was something new to many (or perhaps even most).

As we head into a new year, it's likely that the New. New Normal will be some type of hybrid approach when it comes to vehicle inventory. Inventory levels are coming back, although slowly, and it's quite See you at possible they may not ever return pre-pandemic on-lot levels. This means that those of us in the

business of selling work trucks. vans and SUVs have tremendous opportunities to help our customers adapt to this "new way" of buying. It also means we can reinforce our role as their business partner by helping them in other areas, beyond just purchasing a vehicle. Areas like service, telematics, planning, and a host of other things. The bottom line? This New. New Normal is something we should all look at as an opportunity to help our customers, and our own businesses. as we go forward into 2023 - and beyond.

Work Truck Week 2023!







LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

PLAN "T"

This economy for us FordPros has never been more weird. Never. In the thirty years I have been calling on clients, representing myself as a FordPro, never have I seen anything like it.

I talk often, differentiating my part of the dealer sales environment as this: Those retail sales folks are "hunter/gatherers:" They go out into the field, "kill something," bring it to the desk where they "skin it," and go back out to "kill something else."

On the other hand, my role as a FordPro is more like that of a farmer: I prep the soil, talk to the other farmers about best practices (clubs), then patiently wait while a customer/inquirer comes to my attention, I answer their questions as to best solutions. Then they leave ("unheard of in the retail buy-or-die parlance"), then when they are ready, they return and order something. Some time later, when the chassis is here, and the bodybuilder has applied the best solution to finish the unit, I deliver it (harvest).

So here I sit with virtually no inventory; confusion abounds as to when there will be sufficient chassis for the level of demand; what to do?

A couple issues ago, I encouraged you to "Plan: Be."

Last issue, I encouraged you to "Plan: See."

Now, it's Plan: T: PLANT

No matter what needs to be done today, the opportunity is to develop effective ways of "planting" myself, and my products in the minds of potential clients. I am the right person who will find effective, non-pushy ways to help them come to their best solutions. I have the knowledge or I can find the answers to questions. I am patient, although always open to the right time to get their agreement that it is time to make the informed decision that everybody wants.

These potential clients will know a non-pushy provider every time they see one: they are always drawn to him/her, because the purchase is not an impulsive one: it's essential to their long-term success and they want to be completely confident they are "employing" the right Ford for this job.

Scattering seeds doesn't get results: not until you have exhibited the patience to continue the work and "let nature take its course."

They will, over time, pick the best chassis (Ford)...and they'll buy it from the patient farmer: you!

NOW, GET PLANTING...
HARVEST WILL BE
COMING SOON ENOUGH.

Joe Hughes President, NFTC joehughes@fordpros.com



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Ken Taylor Ken Taylor & Associates

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Editor:

Steve Henning

Media Director/Asst. Editor: Carla Aoyagi

Sponsor Support/Content Editor: Jessee Allread

For inquiries or articles or to be added to the mailing list: nationalfordtruckclub@gmail.com 1-800-413-9030

NFTC/FordPros 2485 Notre Dame Blvd., #370-130 Chico, CA 95928

CONNECTING + THRIVING: NETWORKING IN 2023

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-HIGFREAMS

KNAPHEIDE

SINCE 1848

KNAPHEIDE MANUFACTURING COMPANY TO CELEBRATE 175TH ANNIVERSARY

Quincy, Ill. – The Knapheide Manufacturing Company will celebrate its 175th anniversary this year, marking nearly two centuries as a family-owned and -operated business in Quincy.

In 1848, Herman Heinrich Knapheide, a German immigrant, moved to Quincy and opened a wagon-making shop, the Knapheide Wagon Company.

The business was incorporated in 1893 as the "Henry Knapheide Wagon Company." By 1937, the company's focus had shifted from wagons to automotive bodies. To reflect the change, the company was renamed "The Knapheide Manufacturing Company."

Knapheide began vehicle upfitting in the 1910s with the Ford Model T. The company later became known for its grain bodies, tailored for agriculture. The crash of the agricultural market in the 1980s forced the company to pivot again, this time towards services bodies, which continue to contribute to the company's success under H.W. "Bo" Knapheide IV, the sixth-generation leader of the company.

"This anniversary provides us an opportunity to look back, celebrate our past and appreciate how far we've come," Bo said. "I am proud to be a part of the dedication and determination that has taken place over the decades to get us to where we are today."

In celebration of its 175th year, Knapheide will showcase its heritage display at the NTEA Work Truck Show in March and host a special company picnic in September.

Knapheide continues to provide customers with high-quality, worktransportation solutions and ranks as the nation's leading manufacturer of truck bodies and provider of commercial vehicle upfitting. Knapheide's industryleading truck bodies and truck beds are backed by the largest and most dependable distribution network in the industry. Their comprehensive and innovative selection is wellsuited for commercial agricultural. construction, electrical, HVAC and plumbing vehicles, among other vocations.

For more information go to www.knapheide.com

COMMERCIAL VEHICLE PLAYBOOK AVAILABLE NOW

Work Truck Solutions releases Commercial Playbook series designed to assist auto dealership's growth during evolving times

►hico, CA, January 24, 2023 --been encountering growth limits when targeting their original retail market. As the U.S. and world economy shifts, auto dealers must adjust business plans to take advantage of new opportunities that are becoming available. Every shift in the market reveals new prospects. and Work Truck Solutions® has released its Commercial Playbook series to help dealerships recognize a way to expand their revenue through new market development in the small to medium business space.

Championship sports teams win because they have the right players and a solid playbook. The

Commercial Playbook series from Work Truck Solutions is designed to help dealerships recognize the opportunities in selling to businesses and to assist them in building their road map to successful growth.

CHAPTER 1 - released late in 2022 - highlights how selling to businesses (i.e. commercial vehicles) is a great profit multiplier by outlining many different associated revenue opportunities.

CHAPTER 2 - recently released - covers the New World [Commercial] Sales Environment and includes a three-step plan to guide the implementation of or expansion in a commercial department.

CHAPTER 3 - to be released in late February - outlines how an expanded view of commercial-customer care can fuel the growth of a new commercial department, and add new products and services to the dealer's revenue stream.

Commenting on the purpose of the Playbook, Kathryn Schifferle, Chief Vision Officer, said, "Our experience and data enable us to track industry growth and evolving trends, and we've collated these metrics and insights into our Commercial Playbook series. Our ultimate goal is to provide actionable insights, along with a roadmap, that help dealers explore the tremendous opportunities within the commercial vehicle business."

Work Truck Solutions will continue its commitment to demonstrating the value of the commercial vehicle business model—and what that means for dealerships' bottom lines—by releasing future chapters of the Playbook. Chapters will promote best practices and provide tips for success in the commercial vehicle business.



www.worktrucksolutions.com



2022 ANALYSIS & REVIEW OF THE COMMERCIAL VEHICLE MARKET January 26th 2023

ork the Truck Solutions®. leading authority on commercial vehicles. today released their 2022 analysis of the commercial vehicle market. Work Truck Solutions is the only company that collects national data reflecting the customization of commercial vehicles done after the chassis or van is manufactured by an OEM, which defines their unique commercial use case.

Data for commercial vehicle (CV) sales compiled for 2022 confirmed much of what we anticipated, along with a few positive surprises. Average prices, availability, mileage, and days to turn (DTT) confirmed what was expected; the story of a supply chain devastated by a global pandemic. The silver lining is a slow but steady recovery marked by four quarters of positive trends. The first guarter of 2022 may have been the turning point in the health of the automotive supply chain, and the outlook for the coming year is for continued recovery, although likely at a slow pace as there are still supply chain hurdles to overcome.

Availability of new vehicle inventory is, of course, a prime concern for dealers and business owners alike.

The good news for 2022 was that new on-lot CV inventory per dealer was up 36% in Q4 compared to Q1.

Although the total numbers were still approximately half of what they were in Q4 2020, the averages reveal an upward direction throughout 2022, a trend unseen in the previous two years.

When examining used work trucks and vans, there were a couple of key

takeaways.

Used on-lot commercial inventory per dealer continued to skyrocket, reaching an all-time high for the past three years in Q4 2022 and marking a 144% increase over Q4 2021.

The increasing availability of new work trucks and vans is having an effect on used vehicle sales and pricing. For example, while the average price of a new CV reached an all-time high of \$53,162 in Q4 of 2022, the average price of a used CV declined in both Q3 and Q4 of 2022, representing an 8.3% drop from Q2 2022.

Reviewing days to turn (DTT) data revealed intriguing points.

away amidst inventory concerns; if anything, it has increased."

Overlaying the increase in dealers' new on-lot CV inventory with the reduced DTT—average DTT for new commercial vehicles was down 16% Q4 2022 compared to Q1 2022, and down a whopping 48% Q4 2022 versus Q4 2020—suggests that preorder sales are finally being fulfilled. Even though more new vehicles are arriving on dealers' lots, they are moving faster than ever—likely presold and sent out to be upfitted for immediate duty. This is a trend that will likely continue in 2023.

"The automotive supply chain has undergone massive changes in the last 24 months," continued

" AVAILABILITY OF NEW VEHICLE INVENTORY IS, OF COURSE, A PRIME CONCERN FOR DEALERS AND BUSINESS OWNERS ALIKE. "

Average DTT for used work vans and trucks actually increased mildly in 2022, suggesting that the higher mileage of the vehicles, coupled with slowly returning new inventory, likely meant buyers were attempting to hold out for new CVs when possible.

Given that online buyers searched for new vehicles 19% of the time in Q1 2021, compared to 34% of the time in Q4 2022, the data appears to corroborate prospective buyers' interest in new commercial vehicles.

"Analysis of 2021 through 2022 showed a consistent trend in searches for new and used vehicles," said Aaron Johnson, CEO of Work Truck Solutions. "Although searches for used commercial vehicles outweighed that of new in every quarter, searches for new CVs trended up, while searches for used trended down. Clearly, the desire for new vehicles has not been washed

"When Johnson. new-vehicle inventory dried up, dealers needed a way to attract prospects beyond having a large inventory of work trucks and vans on their lot. Plus OEM's have been pushing dealers to focus on pre-orders. That means our tools CV Showroom™ and EZ Order™, introduced over the last two years to help our customers, are becoming top solutions for dealerships to fulfill their buvers' needs- and make more sales." Johnson wrapped up his comments by saying, "Heading into 2023, we expect a combination of preorders and data-decision-driven on-lot inventory to be the way commercial dealers meet business buver demand, and we look forward to continuing to develop solutions that help our customers take care of their customers."

Learn More at www.worktrucksolutions.com

CO THE HIGHBEAMS



DRIVERGE MOVES INTO NEW LOCATIONS -ON BOTH COASTS

DRIVERGE HEADOUARTERS MOVE INTO NEW LOCATION

kron, Ohio - Driverge® Vehicle Innovations, a wholly-owned subsidiary of MobilityWorks, moved into their new headquarters as an anchor tenant in the Chapel Hill Business Park, a redevelopment of the former Chapel Hill Mall in Akron, Ohio, owned by Industrial Commercial Properties LLC (ICP). As announced back in March, 2022, Driverge now occupies 150,000 square feet of the business park.

Founded in 1997, MobilityWorks began with a single location on Moe Drive in Akron and has since grown to 95 stores and four manufacturing facilities across the country.

MobilityWorks/Driverge Vehicle Innovations, owned by Flexpoint Ford, is the largest upfitter of Ford Transits and upfits for Mercedes Benz USA and Dodge/Chrysler - Stellantis.

DRIVERGE'S CHICO LOCATION MOVES TO EXPANSIVE NEW LOCATION **NEAR AIRPORT**

Thico, California - Driverge Vehicle
✓ Innovations' Chico Location, Formally NorCal Vans, moved to an expansive new location in the Chico Municipal Airport Business Park. Formally Koret Clothing, the space is now being utilized to meet the increasing demand for Mobility vehicles.

> For more information go to www.driverge.com









SAFE FLEET ANNOUNCES NEW SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF **COMMERCIAL VEHICLE NORTH AMERICA**

15, 2022 Safe ecember Fleet is pleased to announce that Steve Kiefer has joined as their new Sr. Vice President. Commercial Vehicle North America. Steve Kiefer replaces Brad Templeman who is retiring at the end of 2022.

Based in the Safe Fleet Elmhurst, IL office, Steve will assume responsibility for the Commercial Vehicle product portfolio and market share growth for their Last Mile delivery, commercial upfitting, and video-based safety solutions.

"I am excited to join the Safe Fleet Commercial Vehicle team," said Steve. "I look forward to growing awareness for Safe Fleet's market-leading brands and innovative safety solutions that help keep commercial vehicle operators safe and productive." Steve joins Safe Fleet from Manitex, a \$250M publicly traded manufacturer of truck mounted cranes and specialized lifting equipment, where he most recently served as their President and Chief Operating Officer. In this role he was responsible for successful top line and EBITDA growth across Manitex's brands in the US. EU. and South America.

Prior to joining Manitex, Steve was the Business Development, Sales, and Marketing VP at the Pettibone Group.

a division of The Heico Companies, where he was responsible for driving global sales growth and implementing channel development strategies. He also served as the President of Intellitec Products, a provider of energy management, electronics, lighting and controls solutions into a variety of markets including the Truck and Trailer market.

"We are pleased to have Steve on board," said Michael Schulte, President of Safe Fleet, "With his broad experience developing and executing market growth strategies, and new product engineering, development. Steve is a great asset to further strengthen our position as the leading supplier of safety and productivity solutions for the commercial vehicle market."

For more information visit safefleet.net/commercial-vehicle





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CONNECTING + THRIVING

UPCOMING TRADESHOWS & EVENTS



Water & Wastewater **Equipment, Treatment & Transport Show**

February 20-23, 2023 Location: Indiana Convention Center - Indianapolis, Indiana Registration Information:

www.wwettshow.com



Transportation Technology Exhibition

February 27-March 2, 2023 **Location: Orange County** Convention Center -Orlando, Florida

Registration Information:

tmcannual.trucking.org



ACCO/PHCC

Ohio Convention & Expo

March 1-3, 2023

Location: Embassy Suites -Cleveland / Rockside Registration Information:

ohioconvention-phccacco.org

WORK TRUCK WEEK 2023

MARCH 7-10, 2023

Location:

Indiana Convention Center -Indianapolis, Indiana **Registration Information:**

www.worktruckweek.com



MARCH 7-10, 2023 INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA



Arbor Expo 23 March 30-31, 2023 **Location:** Eastern States

Exposition - Springfield, Massachusetts

Registration Information:

arborexpo.org



Air Conditioning Contractors of America Expo

April 2 - 5, 2023

Location: New Orleans Marriott -**New Orleans. Louisiana Registration Information:**

www.accaconference.com



North American Snow Conference 2023

April 16-19, 2023

Location: CHI Health Center **Omaha Arena & Convention** Center - Omaha, Nebraska **Registration Information:**

www.apwa.net/SNOW/Home/ SNOW/Home.aspx



IT'S ALL ABOUT OPPORTUNITY - AND THIS ONE IS BIG!

BY STEVE HENNING, SENIOR MARKETING DIRECTOR, WORK TRUCK SOLUTIONS



As the saying goes, "Everything's bigger in Texas." So it's fitting that the NADA Expo was in Dallas, Texas last month. If you're wondering what's so big, I'm talking about the commercial vehicle market and the opportunity it represents.

But if you're reading this publication, and this article, you almost assuredly know that work trucks, vans and SUVs equate to big opportunities. After all, the new and used commercial vehicle market represents over \$300 billion. And, these same vehicles support more than 80% of the U.S. GDP. Now those are some incredibly BIG numbers.



And while the mood at NADA was fairly upbeat, there are still issues causing trepidation among dealers and upfitters, as well as OEMs. One of those is inventory, or lack thereof - even though we'd all say we're in a better place in terms of inventory than we were as recently as a few months ago. Then there's the economy and the upward trajectory of interest rates that are keeping many of us up at night. And I could go on here, but I won't, because despite the challenges, it's still a great time to be in this industry.

Even with some concerns, the commercial vehicle business is strong. Businesses, from small to large, are connected to consumers in just about every way imaginable; from tangible products to services. We all know that work trucks, SUVs and vans are integral to our economy and that consumers AND other businesses rely on them to fulfill their needs. So, no matter where interest rates or inventory numbers are, there's still a need for commercial vehicles. Might that need, and the way we help fill it



for our customers, be different than it was one, two, or more years ago? Certainly. However, the opportunity for not only sales, but also the expansion of the business partner / business customer relationship, is there. And it's BIG. So be sure you're always looking at ways to help your customers. There were lots of ideas on this topic discussed at NADA. Hopefully you were part of them. If not, Work Truck Week is in early March. Hope to see you there!



ALTFUEL NEWS

GREEN TRUCK SUMMIT PART 1: WHAT'S ON THE AGENDA?

here's no question that the commercial vehicle industry achieve is striving to areater sustainability. productivity, and Fortunately. efficiency. there are events like the Green Truck Summit (GTS) that provide insights. resources, and possible solutions to support business owners as the commercial vehicle landscape shifts toward zero emissions.

Scheduled for March 7, 2023, the GTS is part of Work Truck Week and represents our nation's premiere commercial vehicle show. The summit highlights EVs and other advances in commercial vehicle sustainability and efficiency. The Green Truck Summit offers exclusive programs from industry experts, government representatives, and vehicle and equipment manufacturers.



COMMERCIAL VEHICLES AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Although sustainability means different things to different people, we all know it's a critical issue. The challenge we face as business owners is implementing sustainable initiatives while remaining profitable. Integrating green commercial vehicle technology into our value chain is as complex as the topic of sustainability itself. Let's look at some of the issues that will be addressed at the GTS.

COMMERCIAL EV TECHNOLOGY WHAT'S OUT THERE?

No one disputes that the U.S. government is actively pushing for the adoption of EVs as part of a larger initiative to reduce the nation's carbon footprint. But what commercial EV options are actually available on the market today? All issues imaginable are ancillary to the availability of vehicles for sale.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Secondary to availability is charging infrastructure. Integrating EVs into daily work processes necessitates evaluating options such as installing charging units at your own facility or finding the best charging stations both locally and out along your driving routes.

EV BATTERY TECHNOLOGY

Energy storage, in the form of batteries, has historically been one of the weaker links in EV adoption—think "high cost" and "low range." Developing a battery that is safer, costs less, provides a longer driving range, and doesn't use imported "conflict" minerals is, of course, the goal. But progress in battery technology is making headway. Advancements in battery technology and materials are crucial for commercial EVs to be a truly sustainable alternative.

EV ADOPTION CHALLENGES

Deciding to integrate EVs into your fleet is a major decision involving multiple aspects of your business. Usual considerations such as financing and maintenance will require a certain amount of forethought in order to minimize risk.



Financing for EVs can be creative and may include state and federal programs and incentives that support the work truck industry's transition to electric vehicles. Savvy business owners will learn how to leverage available funding opportunities and tax incentives, such as those included in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act. It is wise to get as much help as possible in planning the steps required to maximize the benefits of transitioning to EVs.

COMMERCIAL ICE TECHNOLOGY

EVs seem to garner the lion's share of attention, but not all emission reduction efforts will lead to electriconly solutions. Every improvement in vehicle efficiency reduces fuel consumption, potentially reducing its carbon footprint.

ENGINES

Manufacturers continue to improve the efficiency of internal combustion engines (ICE) that burn diesel for fuel. Alternate fuels for ICE, including hydrogen, are also being developed as means to reduce carbon exhaust output.



ALTFUEL NEWS: GREEN TRUCK SUMMIT PART 1



CONTROL SYSTEMS

Advancements in engine control systems, such as unnecessary idle time, shift points, and acceleration rate, target inefficiencies that increase fuel consumption during the time a vehicle is in use during a shift.

TRANSMISSIONS

Power transmission has a direct impact on total vehicle efficiency. Aspects such as gear ratios and lockup timing help ICE power plants spend more time running within the range where they are most efficient.

It's obvious from the break-out sessions schedule that the show's producer, the NTEA, is savvy to the multiple faces that represent environmentally sustainable solutions in the commercial vehicle industry. Acknowledging that not all emission reduction efforts will lead to electric-only solutions, this show includes topics such as financing initiatives and internal combustion engine (ICE) advancements. The NTEA deserves big kudos for its impartiality in striving to provide a forum for the industry to grow and improve

Learn more and register at worktruckweek.com or contact NTEA at info@ntea.com or 800-441-6832 for more information.

GREEN TRUCK

SUMMIT

TUESDAY, MARCH 7TH 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. (reception from 4-5 p.m.) JW Marriott Indianapolis *GTS Conference Package required



2023 Green Truck Summit kevnote speaker Jennifer Rumsev

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WorkTruck NEW Week 2023 Q. INIC.

ew electricombustion electric and internal commercial vehicles are among the dozens of products slated to debut during Work Truck Week® 2023. As North America's largest work truck event. Work Truck Week has long been the launching pad for new commercial vehicles, bodies, equipment and technology - and 2023 is shaping up to be no different.

Work Truck Week is March 7-10, 2023, at Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis. Green Truck Summit is March 7. Educational sessions run March 7-9. The Work Truck Show exhibit hall is open March 8-10, with Ride & Drive available March 8-9. Register at worktruckweek.com.

New products on tap for the event include EV and internal combustion chassis, truck bodies, accessories, auxiliary power solutions, electric PTOs, software, and snow and ice control equipment. To date, 26 companies have scheduled press conferences during Work Truck Week, including Bollinger Motors, Ford Pro. Hino Trucks. Isuzu Commercial Truck of America. Lion Electric, Mack Trucks, Ram Commercial and Workhorse.

Exhibitors are showcasing some new products ahead of Work Truck Week through the Product Gallery at wtw23.mapyourshow.com. Register and create a WTW23 Planner to add exhibitors, products and educational sessions to a personalized calendar.

An hour before the main exhibit hall opens March 8-9, see what's new from 25 first-time exhibitors in New Exhibitor Pavilion, It's located across from the Hall I Work Truck Show exhibit hall entrance.

Work Truck Week offers opportunities to look into the future of commercial vehicles. Green Truck Summit attendees can hear about upcoming emissions regulations. EV and ZEV advancements. future diesel engine technologies government infrastructure initiatives. Learn what's coming from leading commercial vehicle manufacturers during 17 exclusive **OEM** ΕV manufacturer update sessions offered as part

of the educational conference. During these sessions, company representatives share technical information on their latest chassis specifications and designs, review body and equipment installation options and provide insights into future commercial vehicle plans.

"The work truck industry is constantly innovating," says Steve Carey, NTEA president & CEO. "I continue to be amazed at the amount of new and creative solutions on display each year."

Take a turn behind the wheel of some of the latest electric. alternative fuel and advanced technology vehicles and check out cutting-edge vehicle technology at Ride & Drive on March 8-9. Participating companies include Allison Transmission, ASA/Voyager Camera Systems, Blue Arc | A Shyft Group Brand, BrightDrop, Freightliner Custom Chassis. GreenPower Motor Company. International Truck, Isuzu Commercial Truck of America, Kenworth Truck Company, Lightning eMotors. SEA Electric. VIA Motors Inc., Workhorse and ZEVX. Admission to Ride & Drive is open on a first-come, first-served basis to all Work Truck Week attendees with no additional registration required.



est drive more than a dozen electric commercial vehicles and new internal combustion medium-duty trucks just steps from an

exhibit hall packed with the latest products and technology from 500 companies at Work Truck Week® 2023 Ride & Drive.

Ride & Drive is free and open to all Work Truck Week registrants on a first-come, first-served basis March 8-9, from 11 a.m. -3:30 p.m. Choose from 19 vehicles, including all-electric vans, trucks and unique new zero-emissions vehicles, as well as internal combustion trucks. Ride & Drive also features new

components and equipment to help boost performance, fuel economy, safety and efficiency.

Work Truck Week, North America's largest work truck event, is March 7-10. 2023. at Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis. Green Truck Summit is March 7, educational sessions run March 7-9 and the Work Truck Show exhibit hall is open March 8-10. Register at worktruckweek.com.

"One of the great things about Work Truck Week is not only can you see the latest commercial vehicles. equipment and technology, but you can also try much of it for yourself," says Kevin Koester, NTEA managing director. "If you want to drive the latest medium-duty trucks or zero-

emissions commercial vehicles. vou can walk outside the exhibit hall to Ride & Drive. In an hour, you can accomplish what would otherwise take weeks or months of planning."

For a complete list of vehicles available in Ride & Drive, visit

worktruckweek.com/ rideanddrivevehicles

or check the Work Truck Week 2023 app (available for download at worktruckweek.com/app).

For more information about Work Truck Week, visit worktruckweek.com Join the conversation in social media with hashtags #wtw23, #worktrucks23. #greentrucks23 and #worktruckweek.

WorkTruck EVENTS+ Week2023 AT THE SHOW

KNAPHEIDE SHOWCASES HERITAGE DISPLAY AT WORK TRUCK WEEK



The Knapheide Manufacturing Company is celebrating its 175th anniversary this year. To commemorate this milestone, Knapheide will display a lineup of heritage vehicles and feature a history display in its booth, #2001, at the National Truck Equipment Association's Work Truck Week in Indianapolis, Ind.

WHO: Harold W. (Bo) Knapheide IV, President and CEO, Knapheide and Mandar Dighe, Vice President of Sales and Marketing, Knapheide

WHAT: Press conference covering a brief overview of Knapheide's history, heritage vehicles and new work vehicles on display. Limited follow-up interview slots with Dighe will be available Thursday (3/9) afternoon and Friday (3/10) morning at the Knapheide booth. To schedule interviews, contact Faith Mountain at 217.592.5643.

WHEN: Wednesday, March 8 at 12:00 pm (EST)

WHERE: Indiana Convention Center 100 S Capitol Ave Indianapolis, IN 46225 Booth #2001

WORK TRUCK SOLUTIONS HOSTS "LOUNGIN" ON THURSDAY" AT WTW23

Save the date! Work Truck Week is coming up on March 7 - 10, 2023 in Indianapolis, and we will be there!

Work Truck Solutions invites you to wrap up your Work Truck Week with cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and conversation at the Hyatt Regency, Thursday March 9th from 5-8pm.

Immediately across the bridge from the convention center, this is a great opportunity to relax and chat in a casual atmosphere with Work Truck Solutions and several of their trusted partners like Escalent, Mitsubishi HC Capital America and Crestline Auto Transport.

CLICK HERE TO RSVP



NFTC AND FORDPROS MAGAZINE HAS EXCITING NEWS TO BE ANNOUNCED AT WORK TRUCK WEEK 2023!

Find our announcement at Work Truck Solutions Booth #446



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QUALITY FOCUS DOES NOT CHANGE WITH NEW MODEL YEAR

BY BILL VANDER PLAATS, SCELZI ENTERPRISES, INC

he flagship event of our industry is coming soon to Indianapolis, and there are bound to be plenty of new products revealed at the Work Truck Show. Some will be old horses dressed up in new clothing. while others will take advantage of cutting edge breakthroughs in EV and internal combustion technologies. Some might even unique applications of offer artificial intelligence to mimic some previously-only-human decision making processes. And there will be an air of optimism for the future throughout the show, based largely on the renewed stream of chassis cabs now being sent to dealers and upfitters from Ford and other truck manufacturers. Predictions about the 2023 economy may be fickle, but the pent up demand for work trucks is a thirst not soon to be guenched.



Or when a technology isn't quite ready for prime time. A culture that ensures partners and customers know what they are getting at all times and in all situations. All the technology in the world does not matter if not backed by the character of the person who shakes

commit to it yourself," Scelzi says, "and for me and my brothers this was easy. Our father Monroe drilled into us that if you are going to spend your life doing something, do it well. We put our names on every truck body that we build, and we take that personally. Each body is a reflection of our brand, but also our personal reputation. But the harder part is convincing your work team that there are some things that can't be compromised, no matter the hurdles. That is not typically a message they get from their previous employers, or from other companies they are considering joining. The goal posts have been moved lower at many organizations in recent years, and traits like honesty appear to be in shorter supply. Honesty is the one raw material we need the most to run our organization, and all the work teams in it."

Work teams that are bound to change over time, as employees look for seemingly greener pastures. And work teams that not only must overcome the temporary

"BUT ONE THING THAT MAY NOT BE ON DISPLAY WITH A BIG BANNER OR HIGHLIGHTED BEHIND A LARGE TOUCH SCREEN MONITOR IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL: THE VALUE OF A QUALITY-DRIVEN COMPANY CULTURE."

But one thing that may not be on display with a big banner, or highlighted behind a large touch screen monitor is one of the most important of all: the value of a Quality-driven company culture. A culture that does not waver when supply lines sputter or workforce challenges reach a boiling point.

your hand at the end of the deal, and their company's commitment to the highest quality of products and personal interactions.

Instilling a quality culture is difficult. Maintaining one is even harder. Just ask Mike Scelzi, who has been succeeding at both for nearly 44 years. "You first must

CONNECTING: STICKING TO YOUR VALUES

challenges of COVID workplace restrictions over the past few years, but also operate during a generational change in attitude about the role of the workplace in general. Employees in their 20s and 30s today have a different view than previous groups. Couple that with the legal environment for companies operating in California, and there are days the Scelzi brothers shake their heads in occasional disbelief.

"Our people don't engrave their names on our truck bodies, but we do our best to make them feel like they do", adds Gary Scelzi. "I have been known to get angry when a member of our team does not share the Scelzi passion for truck body perfection that I do, but I know there is a limit to what we can reasonably expect. We have done pretty well keeping a backbone of



long-term employees in place in key areas. They preach the value of Quality and doing it right the first time, so Mike and I don't need to beat that drum as often ourselves. It starts with finding those key people whose personal drive for quality and integrity matches our own - and then taking care of them."

At Scelzi Enterprises, the recipe for success has remained the same, but some of the required ingredients are getting harder to find. "In one way," adds Mike Scelzi, "things are easier now, because the really great people stand out apart from the crowd - but like eagles, they don't often flock together, you need to find them one person at a time."



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GROWTH DURING UNPRECEDENTED TIMES



James Doyle of Innovative Lawn and Landscape LLC explains how Switch-N-Go® helped during COVID-19 crisis.

or over two decades, Switch-N-Go® has been providing cable hoist systems and interchangeable bodies to the landscaping industry. The hoist system is designed for class 4-7 chassis cabs and can be installed on a variety of domestic and import vehicles. Switch-N-Go® offers a fleet of work truck bodies including dump, chipper, and storage bodies, as well as flatbeds, drop box dumpsters, and WorkReady™ subframes. The Switch-N-Go® solution is an ideal fit for businesses that want to maximize their capital budget and minimize equipment idle time by providing crews with the right tool for every job.

When Switch-N-Go® first talked with James Doyle, he had only experienced working with the Switch-N-Go® interchangeable system for a short time. Nearly 5 years later, we spoke with Doyle again to see how different his company is and how much has changed in that short amount of time. The real question should be what hasn't changed. In March of 2020, COVID-19 changed the world, putting fear into

business owners, such as Doyle. Businesses started to shut down and people staved in their homes. However, this turned out to be a blessing for Doyle. He utilized the time to target a different clientele. Ones that know that investments matter. Something that resonates with Doyle as he continues to stand by the belief that "if you work hard, you get what you put in." Meaning, he has always invested in his business, making smart and efficient decisions that help make his business successful. He sought out those clients, understanding that "[the customers will] invest in [Innovative] because [Innovative] invests in good equipment." Those clients would then rave about the amount of work his crew could get done in a short amount of time time savings that he often gives credit to the Switch-N-Go system - and referrals began flooding in.

With the increased demand of work, Doyle knew that he was going to need to expand his equipment. At one point, he had found a used Switch-N-Go® upfitted truck to help with some jobs. Unfortunately, the truck was in bad condition and caused more problems than it was solving, so they took the loss. However, the convenience of having

two trucks that could do the work of several made Doyle realize that a second Switch-N-Go® truck was needed. So, at the beginning of 2021, he traded in his 2019 Ford F450 with a permanent mount mason dump for a 2022 Ford F550 with the newly launched E-Series (electric) Switch-N-Go® hoist system and the updated Versa-Fit™ Bumper System. While it seemed like forever until they finally got the truck in the last quarter of 2021, it was well worth the wait. Doyle loved the updates made to the hoist and bumper systems. The most noticed feature he calls out are the new body hold downs. Not only do they keep everything aligned when loading and unloading, but his crew has also noticed that the bodies do not bounce around as much when on the road. He was also a fan of the swivel hook that



CONNECTING: SUPPORTING PARTNERS

they implemented on the previous hoist model and continued into the newest version, allowing greater flexibility when trying to hook the system to a body. The new bumper system has also worked well. Adding two lights was a nice feature that didn't go unnoticed.

Along with a new truck. Dovle also wanted to add some additional bodies to his fleet. After all, one truck does the work of three if you have the right pairings. Doyle talked with his Switch-N-Go® Authorized Dealer, Ness Automotive, to order some additional bodies. This included: a Storage Body that allowed Dovle and his team to safely secure and store equipment on a jobsite. It also helped reduce the number of wheels on the ground at jobsites that would normally require driving multiple trucks to the site daily; a second Dump Body that was then upfitted with a custom bolt-on leaf box to

assist with leaf collection solutions; and a WorkReady™ Subframe that features a rear cutout, allowing for better weight distribution when being upfitted with a Salt Spreader.

Doyle didn't just expand his equipment, he added new personnel to the Innovative team. A team that he is very proud of. Just like his equipment, Doyle is picky about the work that he wants represented of his business, and he found a team that cares just as much. With two Switch-N-Go® trucks and double the manpower that he had in 2019, Doyle is constantly looking for ways to expand his services. Switch-N-Go® is the perfect tool for landscaping, snow and ice, and smaller construction jobs. For larger commercial builds, Doyle reached out to Bucks Fabricating, a Switch-N-Go® sister company, that manufactures cable and hooklift roll-off containers, and purchased a hooklift container. The combo has helped to transform Innovative. So now what? The world is returning to normal. What's next for Innovative? Doyle would like to see a third Switch-N-Go® truck in his fleet. He also has his sights set on another dump body, with the potential of branching out to stainless steel or aluminum construction for snow and ice management. There is one thing we do know, the future for Innovative include Switch-N-Go®.

Be sure to Visit Switch N Go at WTW23, BOOTH 5133

> For more info visit switchngo.com





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PRIME DESIGN



Scan for WTW23 map



THE COMMERCIAL VEHICLE INDUSTRY 2023

By Kathryn Schifferle, Chief Vision Officer, Work Truck Solutions, featured on DigitalDealer.com

Work Truck Solutions doesn't have a crystal ball, but we do have significant search and usage data exclusive to the commercial vehicle industry: this data helps us anticipate future trends. Just for you: the top five trends we foresee having an impact on the success of your dealership's commercial department.

- · Light-duty trucks will play an expanded role in the business world. Continued supply issues will prompt business owners to leverage myriad add-ons, like toppers, unique toolbox configurations, and tonneau options, which can expand the utility of light trucks for delivery and other services. With a pickup's open vehicle bed, they can manage bigger loads and unevenly shaped freight.
- · Medium-duty truck owners will look for multi-purpose solutions. Just as business owners are pressing their light-duty trucks into multiple roles, owners of medium-duty vehicles will also look to products that will enable them to do more with their trucks. Upfit solutions that offer the ability to be easily "switched" out for different purposes should see higher demand.
- · Final-mile delivery business will continue to shape demand for specific vehicle types. U.S. commercial vehicle availability has been affected

by a number of major issues. including rapid final-mile growth. Even though fewer commercial vehicles were sold in 2022, there was a significant increase in some new vehicle types. Just in the last year, the demand for SUVs. hatchbacks. and mini and passenger van models for commercial use on Comvov.com is up more than 350%. This increase follows the 300% increase in demand on Comvoy.com from 2020 to 2021. Some of these new model types will be used in lieu of more traditional options that will continue to be scarce in 2023.

advantages made possible by the industrial internet of things (IIoT). Myriad software programs make it easier than ever to integrate fleet EVs with a business' value chain.

 Customer demand will continue to force providers to bring merchandise and services to the customer instead of customers going to their place of business. This role reversal began long before the Covid pandemic and shows no signs of abating. In addition to delivery continuing its meteoric rise as an essential service. the franchise space predicts that

" NOW, AS THEY SAY: 'YOUR MILEAGE MAY **VARY' WITH THESE PREDICTIONS. BUT HOW WILL OUR INDUSTRY RESPOND TO THE CHALLENGES** THIS NEW YEAR WILL BRING? "

 EVs will dramatically increase market share of final-mile business. Increasingly strict government regulations will propel the adoption of EVs to new heights in 2023. California legislators are dedicated to the adoption of zero-emission vehicles and where California goes, the rest of the country often follows. Although implied concerns over greenhouse gasses seem to be a major motivator in EV development. there are more business-oriented

services like home renovation and restoration, in-home health care, mobile car repair, home security, pet grooming, and pest control will be big in 2023. Recreation is also close to the top of the 2023 trend list, along with expected growth in secure transport for the cannabis industry.

Now, as they say: 'your mileage may vary' with these predictions. But how will our industry respond to the challenges this new year will bring? Will online vs. brick-and-mortar find equilibrium with the best customer experience in mind? What new upfits will be created to enable business owners to cross-utilize each vehicle in their fleet, or to maximize the newest personal service? One thing is certain, 2023 will be a very interesting year in the commercial vehicle industry.



CONNECTING: 5 STEPS TO MOVE FORWARD

COACH KEN

BY KEN TAYLOR, ken@coachkentaylor.com

THE TIME IS RIGHT

Pandemic, government spending at an all-time high, economic slowdown, price vlagus increases. shortages. and a dozen different opinions of what comes next seem to be on everyone's minds. The word, "recession" rears its ugly head. Unfortunately, the knee jerk reaction is to do nothing and "wait it out." That is the worst thing to do during economic uncertainty. It creates a "self-fulfilling" prophecy of disaster. I could cite a wealth of economic statistics that include production slowdowns, caution by business owners, tighter spending, and price increases (A dozen eggs cost how much?), but in reality, it is during these times that new businesses with innovative ideas are started and name brands actually make giant leaps forward.

Interestingly enough, there is a formula for success during difficult economic times that, if followed, can supercharge your business and give your employees, vendors, and customers confidence that you will not only survive, but thrive! Ready?

STEP ONE:

Stay in contact with customers, suppliers, and prospects. If you don't have a regular publication that keeps all your contacts informed, now is the time to begin.

There are a number of marketing tools that make it simple to stay in touch. Software like "Mailchimp," "Hubspot," and "Aweber" are products that can automate your marketing to better reach customers and prospects. (If you need articles for your newsletter, email me at ken@coachkentaylor. com,I will give you your first twenty to get you started).

STEP TWO:

Make a list of your "Top Twenty" clients and prospects. Start a targeted campaign of "MVP." In sports terminology that stands for "Most Valuable Player." In marketing terms, it stands for "Mail, Visit, Phone." Choose two to three customers a week to either telephone or meet in person just to let them know you are still there and ready to support them.

STEP THREE: Review or rewrite your business plan to adapt to new challenges. Decide what you can do to defeat the obstacles in front of you. Obstacles are overcome with hard work and creativity. Here is an important tip: review your plan monthly, it will help keep you on track. There is nothing worse than a business plan that you file away and don't review on a regular basis.

"...IN REALITY, IT IS DURING THESE TIMES THAT NEW BUSINESSES WITH INNOVATIVE IDEAS ARE STARTED AND NAME BRANDS ACTUALLY MAKE GIANT LEAPS FORWARD..."



STEP FOUR:

If you are not already active in trade associations, such as Associated General Contractors. Home **Builders** Association. Truck Equipment National Association, or National Ford Truck Club, now is the time! Make a point at meetings to connect with at least three individuals you have not met that could be potential new customers.

STEP FIVE:

Get out the door! Visit your best customers and while you are meeting with them, ask for their list of vendors that they depend upon for business. These vendors can become your new customers! Asking for referrals has become a lost art in today's world of business.

These five steps are starters to get you going. Take action now and you will begin to see the results. Here is a simple formula of success that creates results every time:

"WELL DEFINED AND CONSISTENT ACTION, **COUPLED WITH PASSION** AND DETERMINATION IS THE FORMULA THAT **CREATES LASTING** SUCCESS."



Ken Taylor, President of Commercial Truck Training. known nationally as America's Corporate & Personal Coach.

Ken has been interviewed on Fox Business News and has been quoted in the Wall Street Journal. He has consulted with and trained over 20.000 sales professionals and management. His book, Life Without Limits, has been on the best sellers list.

Ken can be reached at ken@coachkentaylor.com or by phone at 904-535-9996.



CONNECTING: FACE-TO-FACE

DEALERSHIP SUCCESS

Shawn Horswill - Work Truck Solutions VP, Customer Success

REDISCOVERING THE VALUE OF IN-PERSON TRADE SHOWS



The auto dealer's trade show "season" has begun, with NADA 2023 already concluded and Work Truck Week coming up on March 7–10 in Indianapolis, Indiana. This is always a hectic but exciting time for many of us. But coming off a multi-year, Covid-induced hiatus from most in-person expos (many started back up over the last year), I am compelled to look at this phenomenon a little closer before diving in.

Trade shows have been a staple on the calendar for most B2B businesses for decades. In a time before we were all connected via the internet, trade shows were a primary vehicle for suppliers and buyers to come together to meet, share news, and do business. However, now that we can buy, sell, and even just chat online, it begs the question: What value do trade shows still provide for business professionals?



This is a valid question, considering the substantial cost involved for both dealership attendees and exhibitors. Answers to these questions are found within the context of the stakeholders' motivations. The Tradeshow Network marketing group (TSN) compiled a list of 21 powerful stats that shed light on the motivations of both exhibitors and attendees.

Although the data is from 2020, it is very interesting, and I think, still valid.

TRADESHOW NETWORK

TSN grouped the data into five buckets labeled:

- WHY EXHIBITORS ATTEND TRADE SHOWS AND EXPOS
- VALUE OF TRADE SHOWS
- PROSPECT BUILDING
- TRADE SHOW CONCERNS
- ATTENDEE EXPERIENCE

It's obvious that a considerable amount of research was conducted.

A few highlights include, "The top 3 sales-related objectives at trade shows are related to relationship management and engagement," coming from the exhibitors' bucket, and "92% of trade show attendees say they are looking for new products," from the attendees' point of view.



DEALERSHIP SUCCESS



I urge you to read the TSN ARTICLE before attending your next show. Let the findings jog your own thought processes and help you firm up your intentions and motivations. Make sure you go into this tradeshow season with a clear idea of what you want out of it.

attendance according to suitability and budget. Time management is critical to maximizing ROI, so make appointments. Even mealtime can be leveraged for networking because everyone has to eat. You can make breakfast, lunch, and dinner appointments with the key

It's too easy to be overwhelmed by a robust expo, so it is incumbent upon you to perform your due diligence to decide if you should even go to a particular event.

It's too easy to be overwhelmed by a robust expo, so it is incumbent upon you to perform your due diligence to decide if you should even go to a particular event. Research what events are scheduled for the vear. Check out what companies are exhibiting and whether their products and services are relevant to your business goals.

Once you decide to immerse vourself in the frav. prioritize people you want to connect with.

plan. the floor Print comfortable shoes, and make a list of things you don't want to forget... like your phone charger.

I would love to see your comments on where you and your dealership stand on the subject!

BE SURE TO CONTACT SHAWN AT SHAWN.HORSWILL@ WORKTRUCKSOLUTIONS.COM **FOR MORE TIPS**

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CONNECTING: GETTING BACK ON YOUR FEET

SPONSOR STORY



AFTER THE STORM: BRYAN'S NEW SPRAY TRUCK

Bryan Picco is the owner of Absolute Pressure Cleaning Services, well established in the Fort Meyers, Sanibel Island area of Florida.

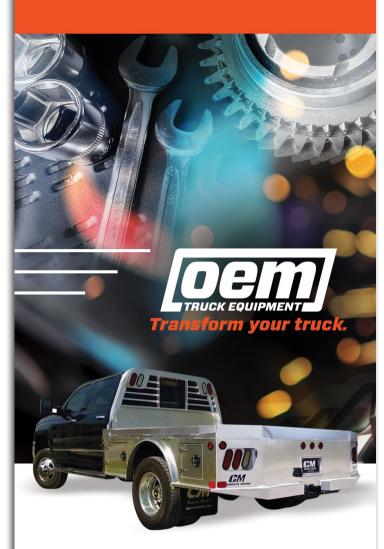
On September 28, 2022 a Category 4 (Almost 5) Hurricane diverted from its predicted path and hit his home and his business.

Although Bryan and his family rode out the stormwith the powerful hurricane force waves surging to just under their 2nd floor residence! - Their car and work truck were destroyed by the storm.

With Premier Truck Center's help, Bryan was able to get his new replacement truck purchased in December. The Aluminum Flatbed body was built and upfitted by Premier Truck Center, Palmetto, Florida - and outfitted with all of Bryan's necessary tanks, pumps, reels, crossbox, ladder racks, etc.

Needless to say, Bryan and his family are thankful to still have their home intact and to be back in business!

For more information:
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CUP JOE DON'T EVEN READ THIS....



The economy is in the pits, There are no fleet/commercial vehicles anywhere in stock. Nobody will dealer trade any inventory: nobody has any.

I might as well hold tight, hang on. Take the OASIS tests required, and wait for brighter days...

ON THE OTHER HAND SOMEDAY, there WILL be enough cab/chassis and cutaways to

fill the needs/demands of fleet/commercial clients, of those vocations committed to building/repairing infrastructure.

I could get prepared, by studying the vocations that I find interesting, and seek to understand the best solutions for the units that complement their work in the field.

I might even get bold and ask my dealer principal to cover at least part of the cost of going to Work Truck Week. I know that, while there, I would find solutions that are being developed that make every vocation I serve even more efficient than was available on their older units.

Speaking personally, I went to my dealer principal some years ago and asked if the company would "scholarship me" to go to Work Truck Week. It was in Orlando, I live in Seattle. My boss advanced me

\$1,000 to help with air travel and hotel expenses. I have gone every year since then, covering my own costs.

I learned that much!

If you never go, you will never know how much you missed; you will never know what you don't know.

See you there?

I hope so!

Joe Hughes joehughes@fordpros.com

Have a Cup o' Joe with me! Send me your story! Share your tip with others... and I will send you \$50 in Starbucks cards!

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