

COMMERCIAL VEHICLE

PRO

EDITION 3

AUGUST 2023

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**PROJECT: DIRECTORY
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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND

As we all know, opportunities come in many shapes and sizes. Looking back over the last couple of years, there were many opportunities to talk to your customers, although many of those conversations weren't quite what you - or your customers - likely wanted. Much of the time, the discussion centered around work trucks and vans you simply didn't have / couldn't get (at least not quickly) for them. Rather, you had to talk about the options for ordering, and the time that would take, or take a look at remarketed inventory when you could get your hands on it.

However, we appear to be at the end of the chain of events that was a global pandemic. Hopefully you never stopped doing what you do and stayed in touch with your customers,

no matter the message. But if not, now is the time to "start over" and get back to connecting with those customers and prospective customers. Or, as Joe mentions, sometimes you need to seize the problem because it's really an opportunity. By doing so, by being eager to respond and act, you can create your own good fortune and quite possibly build a customer relationship for life.

In this issue, we have several articles highlighting businesses and owners who saw an opportunity and capitalized on it. In doing so, they benefited, but so did their future employees and customers. When you step back and think about it, they made, and are still making, an impact, for their family, in their community and on the economy. Read through the

article featuring Everett's Landscape Management and you'll see what I mean. The effect of the business Everett Diemer founded has been felt for almost 70 years!

Without a doubt, each of you are also making an impact because you are assisting those entrepreneurs who had a vision - and it's quite possible you're an entrepreneur too - with making that positive mark in their town, for their customers, and for our economy.

As the headline says, opportunities abound. Read through the success stories in this issue for some inspiration and then seize the day and make your mark!

Steve Henning

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COMMERCIAL VEHICLE

PRO

**SPECIAL THANKS
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CONTENTS

Note From the Editor:	Opportunities Abound	3
Masthead:	Meet the Team	4
In The Highbeams:	Bucks Fab, WTS, Venco Venturo, Safe Fleet	7
Work Truck Solutions:	Q2 2023 Market Analysis	11
Convoy Direct:	The Frustration of Google Searches	13
Switch'N'Go:	From Permanent Mount Unit To Interchangeable Truck	14
Scelzi Inc:	Perfect Tool For a Growing Business	16
Venco Venturo:	Unique Crane Installation Simplifies Deliveries...	18
Reading Truck:	Reducing Downtime With Mobile Field Service	19
General Motors:	Ed Peper Retires	20
Podcast:	Buying And Selling From Coast To Coast	23
Knapheide:	3 Customer Service Tactics For Increasing Sales	24
Transfer Flow:	Made in America - 40 Year Anniversary	27
Alt-Fuel:	Solve the Charging Infrastructure Puzzle with V2G	28
Coach Ken:	Almost There! Facing Failure	30
Dealership Success:	Rev Up Shopper Engagement	32
Calendar:	Upcoming Tradeshows & Events	34
Cup o' Joe:	Seize the Problem	36



SAID BEST BY OUR CUSTOMERS



“Just last month, Work Truck Solutions and 2-Minute Prospecting gained me 5 sales. [These were] 5 untapped sales that I wouldn’t have normally got.”

Mike Nemecek
Fleet & Commercial Sales
Paradise Chevrolet



“Work Truck Solutions completely changed the environment in which we sell commercial vehicles because they changed how we were able to display them on our website.”

Jason Savino
Marketing Director/Sales Manager
All American Auto Group




“We tried Work Truck Solutions and a competitor at the same time, and Work Truck Solutions came out way ahead. We started with one of our stores, and it worked out so well that we immediately [enrolled our] second store.”

Dan Hogan
Commercial Manager
Victory Lane Auto Group

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GEOFF SHEPARD ON THE AUTO REMARKETING PODCAST

Joe Overby, senior editor of Cherokee Media Group, speaks with Work Truck Solutions' Geoff Shepard in this podcast about his insights on Work Truck Solutions' partnerships with independent dealers, the opportunities and issues in the work truck/commercial vehicle segment, and much more.

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PARTNERSHIPS WITH INDEPENDENT DEALERS

THE AUTO REMARKETING PODCAST WITH GEOFF SHEPARD



BUCKS FABRICATING® EXPANDS SHIPPING OPTIONS *Same great product with improved shipping and availability*

Hadley, PA – August 1, 2023: Bucks Fabricating®, Pennsylvania's original roll-off container manufacturer, has expanded into Tishomingo, MS to better serve the Southern market. Manufacturing and stocking several of our WorkForce™ family of products there ensures customers receive the same great Bucks Fabricating® products with improved shipping and availability. Several years in the making, the

recent Federal Signal acquisition of Bucks Fabricating® (Bucks) and all Deist Industries, LLC opened some exciting doors for the company. Now officially part of the Truck Bodies & Equipment (TBEI) division of Federal Signal, Bucks is partnering with a sister equipment manufacturer in Tishomingo, Mississippi. After collaborating on the Bucks manufacturing practices with a team of engineers, production, and sales, this goal has now become a reality.

"The Bucks Fabricating® team recognized the benefits of a second location which would service the southern market with the same

great products. This new location allows us to be more competitive on shipping rates, as well as have available inventory on the ground ready for immediate shipment." ~ Crystal Roseberry, Sales and Marketing Manager at Bucks Fabricating®

In addition, the redesign BucksFab.com makes it easier than ever to shop for your roll-offs and small cans. Whether you are looking to purchase from the Hadley or Tishomingo facilities, we have Tubs, Strong Boxes, and Trash Boxes in stock and ready to ship!

ABOUT BUCKS FABRICATING
For nearly 40 years, Bucks Fabricating® has been committed to building high quality roll-offs and small cans that keep your business in motion. Our full line of waste hauling products includes front/rear loading containers, a variety of roll-off containers, and custom solutions, providing you with a one-stop-shop for all your business needs.

Visit www.bucksfab.com for more information and to get a quote today





VENCO VENTURO ANNOUNCES CHANGES TO LEADERSHIP TEAM

Several corporate roles filled at the 71-year-old company

Cincinnati, Ohio, June 22, 2023 – Venco Venturo®, an industry leader in the manufacturing, service and sales of work-ready service cranes, truck bodies, hoists and accessories since 1952, have made several changes to its leadership team.

The moves come as current President/Owner Brett Collins and Vice President of Finance/Owner Michael Strittholt begin to scale back from their respective roles to allow new members of the leadership team to grow into new positions. These structural changes went into effect during April and May 2023.

The changes within Venco Venturo are as follows:

- Stephanie Berg – Controller
- Ian Lahmer – Vice President, Sales and Marketing
- Jack Schmidt – Western Territory Manager
- Katie Sennett – Inside Sales & Marketing Support Specialist
- Scott Tillery – Vice President, Operations

“Brett and Michael are fantastic to work with,” Venco Venturo Vice President, Sales and Marketing Ian Lahmer said. “Their vision and leadership have brought Venco Venturo to the successful level we are at today.”

“At the same time, we are excited to have such talented, experienced people step into new positions on our team,” Lahmer continues. “We look forward to the bright future of our company.”

“I know I share everyone’s enthusiasm for what’s on the horizon at Venco Venturo,” Vice President, Operations Scott Tillery added.

“Everyone is committed to continuing to provide the best, most durable and safe equipment for our customers in many industries, while focusing on building a successful future.”

VENCO VENTURO PROMOTES IAN LAHMER TO VICE PRESIDENT, SALES AND MARKETING

Lahmer has spent 10 years with the company in various roles.

Cincinnati, Ohio, June 22, 2023 – Venco Venturo®, an industry leader in the manufacturing, service and sales of work-ready service cranes, truck bodies, hoists and accessories since 1952, announces Ian Lahmer as its new vice president, sales and marketing.

“I couldn’t be more excited for this opportunity, Lahmer said. “I look forward to working in new ways with

all the amazing people here to lead our ongoing sales and marketing efforts.”

Lahmer has worked at Venco Venturo since 2013, most recently as marketing director and western territory manager.

In his new role, Lahmer will direct sales forecasting activities, provide leadership in developing new sales and marketing programs and manage internal sales and marketing teams, among other duties.

“I’m excited to lead our team in new business development endeavors and continue to support the growth of our company in all areas.”

Lahmer officially began his new role in April 2023.

To learn more about Venco Venturo and its product and service offerings, visit venturo.com



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Delivery Is a Welcomed Package of
Speed and Efficiency*

Belton, MO (July 14, 2023) - Safe Fleet, the leading provider of safety solutions for fleet vehicles, is proud to unveil its newest technology, FoldPro Shelving™, by Prime Design. Because speed is what counts in last mile delivery, FoldPro Shelving offers a solution that boasts a unique design meticulously engineered to offer unparalleled durability, enhanced productivity, and speed all while prioritizing safety. FoldPro Shelving is available for Transit, Sprinter, Promaster and Box Truck vehicles and provides the following features:

- + **Safe, Intuitive & Ergonomic Operation:** Effortless one-hand operation with a dependable latch mechanism that holds each shelf securely in place, whether open or closed.
- + **Driver Fatigue:** Reduces driver distractions by minimizing vibration and noise with a quiet spring retention shelf-latch system.
- + **Patented Durable Design:** Strong, yet lightweight aluminum design yields increased payload and achieves 400 lb. per shelf weight capacity.
- + **Flexible Storage:** Maximize available space with the option to stow shelves in a vertical position when not in use.
- + **Quick, Easy, and Adjustable:** Avoid installation headaches with assembled components and convenient shelf height adjustment capability.



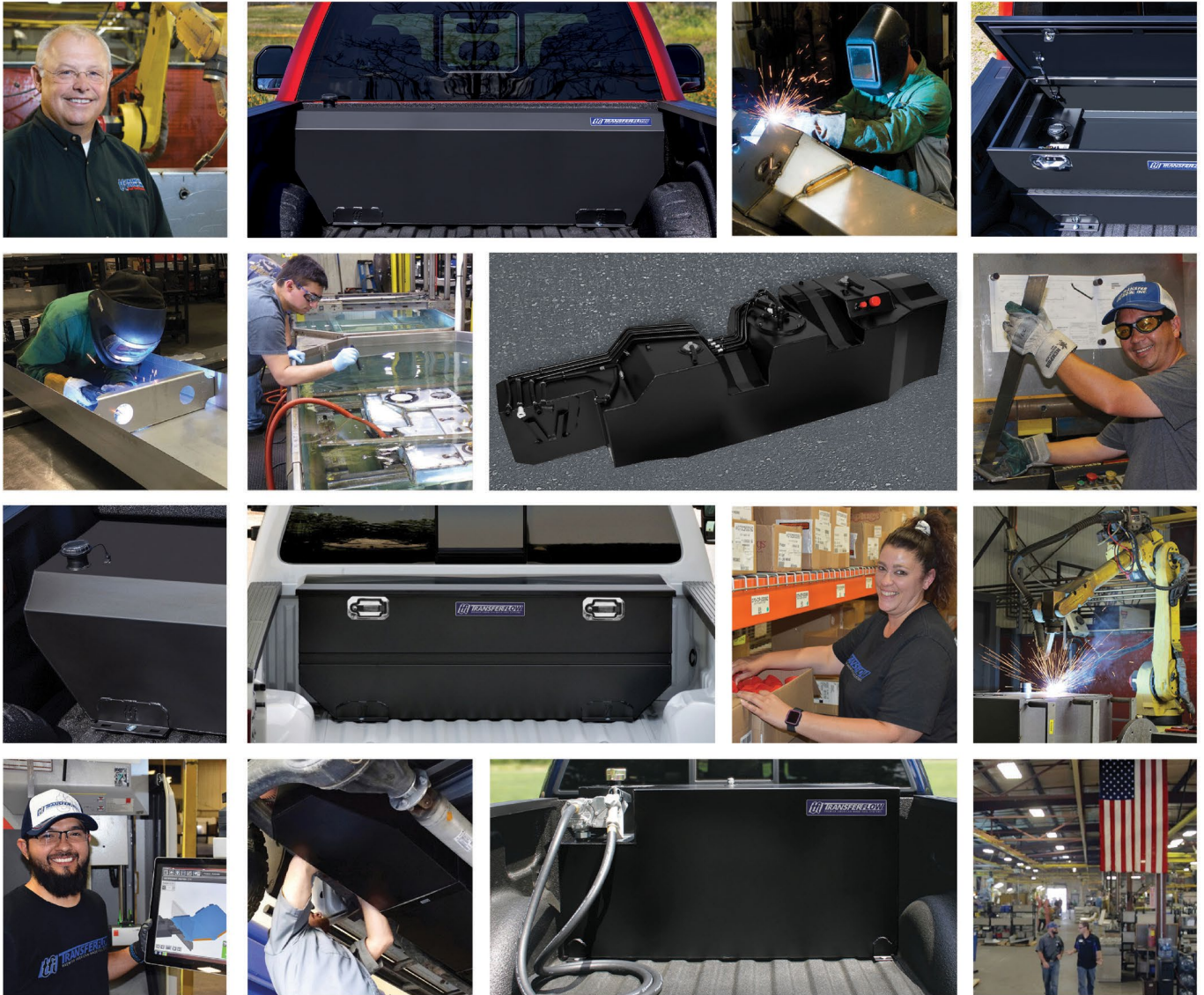
“Delivery vehicles take a beating due to the nature of the job,” says Jon Busch, Product Manager, Prime Design. “This demands a robust system that will keep its integrity throughout the vehicle’s lifespan. Focusing on our expertise, engineering, design and manufacturing, FoldPro Shelving provides a reliable system that

delivers.” FoldPro Shelving from Safe Fleet is available starting in July.

To learn more about FoldPro Shelving™ please visit www.primedesign.net/products/foldpro-shelving/
For more about Safe Fleet, go to: www.safefleet.net



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WORK TRUCK AND VAN MARKET CONTINUES GROWTH WITH SIGNIFICANT UPWARD TRENDS IN INVENTORY AND SALES

The commercial vehicle market continues to grow with significant upward trends in inventory and sales.

INVENTORY

- New average on-lot inventory per dealer experienced strong growth, up 24.8% Quarter-over-Quarter (QoQ) and 70.5% Year-over-Year (YoY). Continuing demand combined with increasing inventory suggests we can expect sales to grow throughout the balance of 2023.

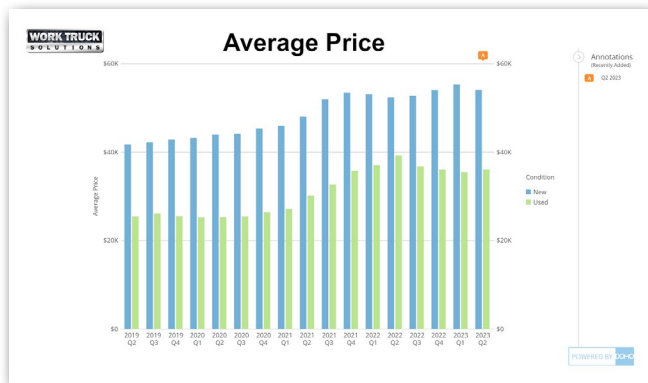
- Evidence of the turmoil in the automotive supply chain over the last year is seen in the dramatic 35.3% YoY used on-lot inventory per dealer increase.

- EV on-lot inventory also saw an upward trend with a 9.7% QoQ increase in new Hybrid/Electric commercial vehicles per dealer, and a 13.3% increase YoY.

PRICES

- Average prices of new commercial vehicles fell 2.1% QoQ after experiencing three straight quarters of increase. However, average prices YoY were still up 3.4%.

- Average prices of used commercial vehicles showed an increase of 2.1% QoQ but a 7.6% YoY drop.



SALES

- Sales of new vehicles enjoyed a significant 20.8% increase in both QoQ and YoY. The large influx of inventory hitting lots in Q1 was likely responsible for the increased movement in Q2, as dealers could fulfill more of the pent-up demand for work trucks and vans.

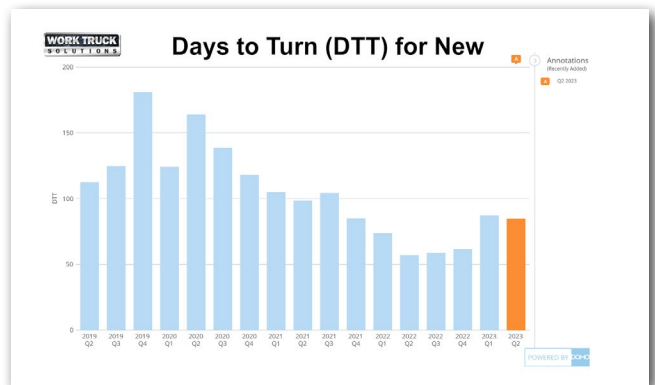
- Used vehicle sales also had a strong showing when examining YoY numbers, with average sales of work trucks/vans per dealer increasing 42.3% YoY, but a slight drop QoQ of 3.0%. The fact that YoY used work trucks and vans posted such positive sales numbers, despite the

median mileage climbing 5.0% YoY demonstrates their important position in the commercial market.

- Hybrid/EV sales have remained cautiously steady over the last five quarters, showing a decent appetite for alt-fuel options within the market. However, lagging availability and minimal charging infrastructure continue to contribute to a somewhat guarded adoption by business owners.

DAYS TO TURN

- After three straight quarters of increasing Days to Turn (DTT) for new vehicles overall, data showed a slight dip with a 2.3% QoQ decrease, while the YoY DTT increased by 48.2%.



- Used vehicle movement also improved in Q2 with an average DTT QoQ decrease of 9.6%, although YoY DTT increased by 25%.

"Our Q2 2023 analysis indicates that the commercial vehicle industry is experiencing significant growth, despite current economic uncertainties," stated Aaron Johnson, CEO of Work Truck Solutions. "For dealers, and the industry at large, success in adapting to these changes lies in the utilization of digital tools and making informed decisions guided by data specific to commercial operations. Catering to the evolving needs of business customers paves the way for continued growth and success."

Work Truck Solutions continues to monitor and analyze the market to provide valuable insights to dealers and buyers alike.

For More Information visit worktrucksolutions.com

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THE FRUSTRATION OF GOOGLE SEARCHES

PROJECT: DIRECTORY

It will not surprise you that sixty-two percent of business buyers say a web search is one of the first three resources they use to learn about a solution.
 -from *Worldwide Business Research*

So how do you stack up when a business prospect goes online to do a search? You probably understand your buyers pretty well, but have you made a list of their top search terms? Go ahead, pretend to be a customer and try to search online by what your company sells, by what you do, or by the certifications you've earned... and see if you end up finding your company. The odds are against it.

After ten years of learning how to attract commercial vehicle shoppers by displaying highly accurate upfit configurations online, it wasn't difficult to discover that a completely different approach was needed when commercial vehicle buyers are looking for information. Whether they want to know more about a local dealership's commercial capabilities, find an upfitter to handle their custom needs, or are looking for other important business information, they are frustrated by traditional online searches. Their typical search only leads them to numerous company URLs, of which many don't match their criteria, but they don't learn that until they dig deep on each one - again, very frustrating for them.

If you're wondering how you can participate in helping business shoppers that are interested in learning about your available products, looking for the right local or specialist partner to work with, and looking for any special services that you have, this next section is for you.

Comvoy.com has committed to investing in building the perfect directory for commercial vehicle buyers! Building a directory that will allow businesses to search by product type, product brand, type of business, location, NTEA membership and certification,

and much more. Version 1 of the directory has just launched.

If you are already a Work Truck Solutions dealer or partner, or you are an NTEA manufacturer or distributor member, your business automatically has a basic listing in the Comvoy directory.

Basic listing example:

And now for the exciting part: for the remainder of 2023, all NTEA members can be upgraded to the enhanced directory listing at no charge!!! Simply reach out to Comvoy via email to provide: social links, logo, text (up to 3,000 characters), and your list of product, service and tags for deeper search.

Enhanced listing example:

Comvoy.com is committed to growing traffic to their commercial vehicle industry directory, while learning about how businesses want to discover products and services. With a successful and comprehensive directory, upfitters can extend their brand, and be matched to the right business customer and/or dealership. Keep tuned-in here for more information as this project continues!



FROM PERMANENT MOUNT UNIT TO INTERCHANGEABLE TRUCK

EVERETT'S LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT, INC. MAKES THE SWITCH TO SWITCH-N-GO®

Everett Diemer returned from the service to Grand Rapids, MI in 1956. Not content with idly standing by, he realized a need in his community for landscaping and lawn maintenance. Everett's tenacity outweighed his lack of knowledge, and he dove into the industry headfirst and with a smile. He purchased a 1946 International truck, a trailer, and some lawn mowers. After hiring a few employees, including his lovely wife Linda, he secured a small base of customers and Everett's Lawn Service was born. He was well loved by his customers and happy to help wherever he was needed, and would often be spotted carrying in groceries and washing windows. Everett was the embodiment of "the

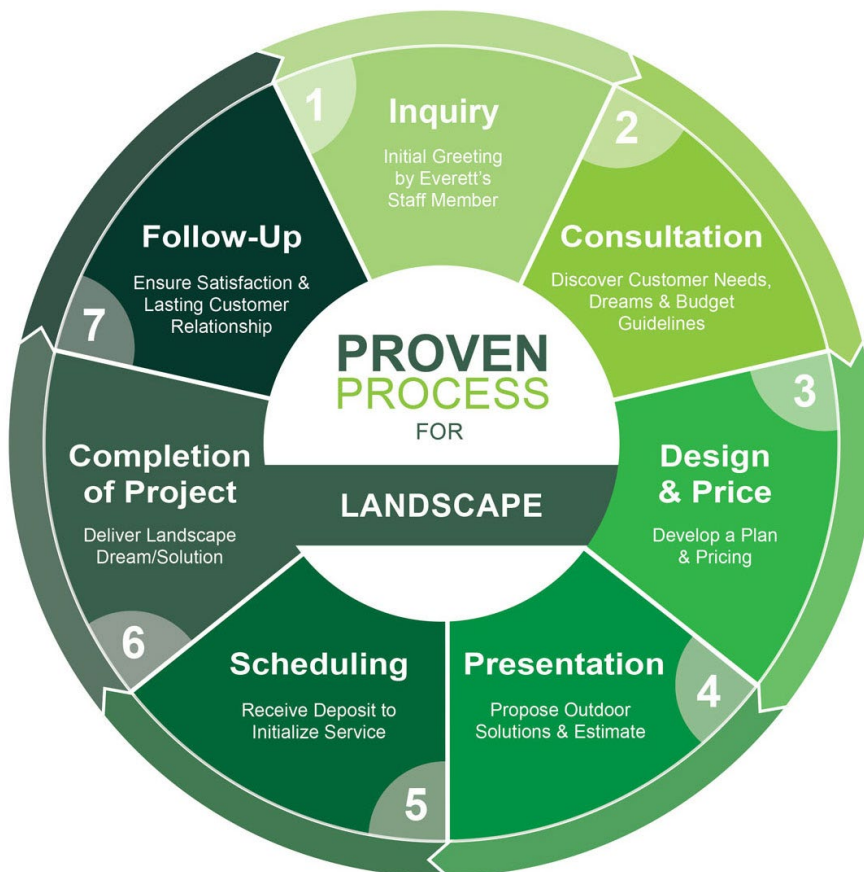
customer is always right." Exceeding customer expectations became his hallmark and the catalyst to his company's continuous growth.

Over the years, as business grew, they made the decision to rebrand as Everett's Landscape Management, Inc. (Everett's). On the home front, Everett and Linda started a family and as the children grew, three of them took an interest in the business as well. His daughter, Ellen, originally joined the company as a secretary, making sure the customer experience started with the first 'hello.' His sons, Brian and Brent, worked alongside the crews and showed a passion and eye for landscape design. Everett fostered this path and it eventually blossomed

into a great success. More services were added to Everett's portfolio in this time as well, such as snow and ice management and landscape construction and renovation. In 1997, Everett and Linda retired, finalizing the transition of the company to Brent, Brian, and Ellen. They continued to set and achieve new goals and ultimately continue the growth of the business. In 2013, the third-generation joined the ranks. Their most recent expansion of a retail plant center for customers, Everett's Gardens, opened in 2018.

One thing that never wavered over the 67+ years of Everett's Landscape Management, Inc. being in business, was the need for efficient equipment. Their fleet has changed a lot since Everett bought that 1946 International truck back in 1956. They had trucks with salt spreaders, flatbeds, pest control sprayers, hydroseeders, permanent mount dump units, and even a few roll-off trucks in their fleet. In 2012, they took a long look at their fleet. How could they get more out of those trucks? Many were relegated to one single purpose and would often sit idle for several months out of the year. Everett's reached out to their long-time truck dealer, B&B Truck Equipment, who recommended the Switch-N-Go® interchangeable truck body system.

It turns out, the Switch-N-Go® system is ideal for customers who want to utilize a single truck for multiple applications. Designed for Class 4-7 truck chassis, Switch-N-Go® provides electric-over-hydraulic and full-electric hoist systems and nearly 30 different work truck bodies to fit a variety of business needs. The system can be added to a new or used vehicle, and



INTERCHANGABLE TRUCK

be a complete replacement solution for a permanent mount chassis. That's exactly what Everett's was looking for. They had a current medium duty permanent mount dump body that was sitting idle for half of the year. Opting for a Switch-N-Go conversion would allow the truck to provide solutions for each aspect of their business, all year long.

The process was simpler and more successful than expected. They delivered their permanent mount 2012 Isuzu dump truck to B&B Truck Equipment, who removed the dump body and replaced it with an electric-over-hydraulic hoist system. Once complete, Everett's picked it up, along with their four interchangeable bodies; a Storage Body, a Dump Body, a Drop Box, and a Standard Subframe (upfitted with a Salt Spreader).

With this initial purchase, Everett's saw an immediate change in their business. Before Switch-N-Go®, once Everett's transitioned to their winter fleet, it would be a large and cumbersome task to switch a truck to perform landscape jobs. Even on good days this task deterred them from taking advantage of the weather to increase revenue. Now, they had the ability to switch back and forth within just a couple of minutes and take advantage of late fall and early winter landscape jobs.

Fast forward to 2023 and Everett's has a busy fleet where they mobilize 6 trucks, all with the Switch-N-Go® system, and more than a dozen interchangeable truck bodies. Their current fleet is more efficient and tailored to their ever-changing needs and seasonal flexibility. They are doing more work than ever and completing it

in a short amount of time.

Everett loved working with people and pleasing his customers. He spoke truthfully, followed through on his promises, and provided his customers exceptional care that resulted in immediate satisfaction. His children kept those values alive when they took over. Switch-N-Go has been a huge help in making that happen. As the business continues moving forward, Everett's continues to add more Switch-N-Go trucks to their fleet and see the benefits every single day!



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LANDSCAPERS FIND PERFECT TOOL FOR THEIR GROWING BUSINESS

C4 Landscaping specializes in residential and commercial landscaping and repair in Linden, California, near Stockton. Between droughts, record rainfall and fires, as well as intense heat waves, the past few years have been very challenging for them, as it has for everyone in the landscaping field. Grass, plants, and other foliage struggle to survive and thrive in these extreme conditions.

Owner Joe Cordeiro faces these challenges with 25 years of experience and the best tools he can find. "We look for function first and great longevity second," says Cordeiro, "and that includes the service trucks we

use as well. We have tried quite a few." Eventually they settled on the Ford F-Series, teamed with Scelzi's premium truck bodies.

When a new customer first sees a member of the C4 Landscaping team roll onto their property, there is no mistaking they are dealing with an elite service team. The rugged yet stylish truck body, covered in a jet black, highly reflective paint finish verifies that these are serious professionals. The trucks are a reflection of the company values Cordeiro instills in his team.

"We didn't start with Scelzi truck bodies at first, because we didn't realize there was such a large

gap in quality between them and other suppliers," states Cordeiro. "But we saw how much nicer they looked and the design of the hinges and other features, and it was obvious they were built to last a long time. We also love the degree of customization we can do that still retains the premium Scelzi quality. Our 5-year old Scelzi bodies still operate as well as the new ones we got last year, and their customer service has always been top-notch."

Whether on a new installation or repairing a broken water pipe, the work teams at C4 have seen quite a few changes in tools and techniques over the years.

"WHEN A NEW CUSTOMER FIRST SEES A MEMBER OF THE C4 LANDSCAPING TEAM ROLL ONTO THEIR PROPERTY, THERE IS NO MISTAKING THEY ARE DEALING WITH AN ELITE SERVICE TEAM."

The Growing Fleet of Scelzi Truck Bodies



BEST-IN-CLASS

our business is growing fast, but also because our tasks are made a little bit easier when you have the right equipment. We certainly feel that Scelzi truck bodies are perfect for us now and in the foreseeable future."

"WE CERTAINLY FEEL THAT SCELZI TRUCK BODIES ARE PERFECT FOR US NOW AND IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE"



As Joe looks back on those changes, his son Jozeph is looking forward, with a degree in ornamental horticulture and a hunger to learn more. Adds Jozeph, "We are getting ready to order another batch of

Scelzi trucks now, and everyone is a bit excited. Both because



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Automotive Parts Solutions (APS), located in the Rockville St. Cloud area of Minnesota, is a certified recycler and supplier of used auto parts to insurance companies, collision centers and auto repair shops throughout Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Wisconsin and Iowa.

THE CHALLENGE

Robert Witzmann, operations manager for APS, manages the recycling yard as well as the sale of engines and transmissions. Many of the delivery vans are cube vans with heavy, expensive liftgates, but Witzmann needed a crane for a medium-sized Ford Transit Connect van. A hydraulic lift wasn't viable because the only installation option was on the side of the van, which would have rendered one of the van's side doors unusable.

THE VENTURO SOLUTION

APS worked with Venturo distributor North Central Truck Equipment in St. Cloud, Minnesota, to install a specialized crane developed by Venco Venturo that is the first of its kind in the industry, the Venturo VC1000 Van Crane.

The VC1000 allows for safe and powerful lifting without the need for a forklift or expensive liftgate.

"We use the Ford Transit for short runs and customer visits, and it rides like a big minivan," said Witzmann. "It's convenient to have the crane available without having to drive a large cube."

Witzmann said the VC1000 crane is very secure, swings and pivots nicely and doesn't move around. The crane utilizes a unique dual floor and ceiling mounted mast



that integrates with the van structure itself to ensure maximum structural integrity. The horizontally articulated boom uses roller bearings that allow the operator to guide the load easily in and out of the van. The crane also features two unique rotation control features for the primary and secondary booms that utilize two hand levers that operate multi-positional locks as an additional safeguard for operators.

CONCLUSION

Witzmann said Venco Venturo customized the VC1000 crane to meet APS' unique needs.

"We can use the smaller transit vehicle like a full-size truck and use the crane to lift and deliver diesel engines, transmissions and other heavy equipment we wouldn't be able to lift without the crane," said Witzmann. "It handles everything we need."

The crane folds up compactly against the interior wall of the van where it is protected from the weather.

"The crane only takes up about 10" x 10" of floor space behind the wheel well and we can still get a sheet of plywood in there, so it takes up no usable floor space. There is a basket for the controls, and it

tucks nicely out of the way when we're not using it," said Witzmann. "Safety bars get salt and debris in them, and this crane always looks brand new since we don't have to expose it to weather conditions."

The VC1000 crane has required little maintenance since APS has used it.

VC1000 Crane Features:

- Horizontally articulated jib boom
- Max. capacity of 1,000 lbs.
- Six ft. reach
- 12V DC motor
- Planetary gear
- 1.3HP winch
- 12 ft. corded controller

"We have had no issues with our work van crane. It's very easy to use and handles everything we need", Witzmann said. "Venco Venturo has great customer service and has really taken care of us. The VC1000 has really been a good piece of machinery for us, and we can always count on it to work."

Robert Witzmann
Operations Manager, APS

ED PEPER RETIRING FROM GENERAL MOTORS: A Look into His Career and Legacy

After a remarkable career spanning over four decades, Ed Peper is bidding adieu to General Motors. His influence and impact on the company have been nothing short of extraordinary, and his retirement marks the end of an era.

A GM VETERAN

Ed Peper joined General Motors in 1984, making him a quintessential GM veteran. The dedication and passion he brought to the company throughout his successful career has been influential in shaping the company into what we know today. His 35 plus-years with General Motors encompassed various significant roles and milestones, positioning him as a true icon within the automotive industry.

PEPER'S CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

Ed kickstarted his career as a district sales manager, where he showcased his innate ability for management and sales from the very beginning. As he climbed the ranks within the company, he took charge of the Chevrolet brand in 2005, serving as the General Manager of the North American division.

One of his significant accomplishments was launching the Chevrolet Silverado and helping it attain record-breaking sales. In 2009, Peper stepped into the role of Vice President of Fleet and Commercial Sales, playing a crucial role in the growth and management of GM's commercial business operations.

In recent years, Peper held additional leadership positions in GM's commercial operations.

Peper played a pivotal role in advancing General Motors' fleet initiatives and championing sustainable development through GM Envolv. His recent positions, directing sales support, fleet services, and remarketing, further deepened his role in the commercial realm.

Under his leadership, GM Fleet saw substantial growth, solidifying its position as a market leader, while he persistently focused on the needs of commercial customers. Moreover, Peper helped shepherd innovative fleet solutions by integrating alternative propulsion vehicles, all in the pursuit of reducing emissions. In line with that vision, he was instrumental in the creation and development of GM Envolv, a new business unit

encompassing products, technologies and services that can help its fleet customers. His steadfast commitment to sustainable transformation in the fleet industry leaves an enduring and positive impact on the company, setting the bar high for future innovations.

PEPER'S LEGACY

Ed Peper's leadership and guidance have left an indelible mark on General Motors in more ways than one. His impressive career saw him:

1 DRIVE INNOVATION:

Under his tenure, Ed made significant strides in driving innovation, including the incorporation of electric, autonomous, and connected vehicles into the company's fleet lineup.

2 BUILD STRONG RELATIONSHIPS:

Peper played an integral role in nurturing relationships with both dealers and customers, laying the groundwork for fruitful partnerships.

3 PILOT GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT:

Ed's strategic thinking and proactive approach led to an overall upward trajectory in the sales and market share for the various brands and departments he managed.



FINAL WORDS

As Ed Peper hangs up his hat at General Motors, his retirement marks a pivotal chapter in General Motors' commercial history. His contributions to refining and transforming GM's commercial and fleet strategies will always be appreciated. As he retires, we laud his impact in forging a leading commercial and sustainable footprint for GM, and wish him the best in his retirement.



Ed Peper's legacy with General Motors is intertwined with business and professional accomplishments, especially with commercial and fleet development. But Ed's personal commitment always begins and ends with people.

"The fleet business is a relationship business. You won't be successful if you don't have great relationships with customers, dealers, and the people you work with. I don't count success only as sales, but also in the number of friends I've made along the way."

—Ed Peper



Ed never lost sight of his roots in sales trenches and could often be found celebrating and lauding the accomplishments of GM rank and file employees whom he considered the backbone of the company.

"Ed has been a great supporter, fan, and friend of mine for many years. I appreciate all that he's done in the past and the road he's helped pave for the future."

—AJ Hewitson, Commercial & Fleet Sales Director at Paradise Chevrolet Cadillac

"Treat people with respect. There are a lot of rules in business, but I have yet to find a better rule than the Golden Rule."

—Ed Peper



Ed Peper arrives on stage in a Silverado EV Work Truck during the 2023 GM Solutions Summit event. The Silverado EV is being launched with fleet customers first, not retail; a huge win for GM's commercial business as well as its fleet and commercial customers.



REDUCING DOWNTIME WITH MOBILE FIELD SERVICE

One of your operators accidentally drives over their crane remote on the jobsite while the crane is suspended in the air. The tailgate release on your dump body is malfunctioning in the middle of a landscaping project. Your work truck's electric inverter will not power up, leaving you without 110V in the field.

Repairs take time. And time is money. When your business depends on fully operational work trucks, you benefit greatly from having access to mobile field services, and their ability to meet you and your team wherever you work. Work truck equipment manufacturers who provide in-field support bring added value to owners, operators and fleet managers. Through their service locations or distributor partners, they've upfitted and outfitted your work trucks to make them work for you.

DEEP KNOWLEDGE

Utilizing your work truck body's manufacturer for mobile field service means you're working with an end-to-end partner who understands the ins and outs of its products. They employ a team of technicians who make, mount and install parts on your vehicles. Essentially, it's manufacturing excellence meets mechanical expertise.

While you can lean on local mechanics who work on all types of vehicles or dealerships who specialize in their brand of vehicles, work truck equipment manufacturers live, sleep and breathe work trucks. In the shop, they're helping customers with parts, accessories and upfitting opportunities, as well as typical services like annual equipment inspections. This knowledge and mechanical know-how follows technicians into the field when you need them most.

SPEED, ACCURACY, EFFICIENCY

In today's fast-paced business environment, technology can help enhance operational efficiencies. For mobile field service, mobile technology and applications do just that.

When a technician arrives in the field to support your work truck issue, they're ready to assess and diagnose your work truck's condition. Adding to their existing knowledge, scanning and diagnostic tools help a technician read your work truck's more intricate systems with ease. Quickly identifying the issue at hand, diagnostic systems integrate with the equipment manufacturer's inventory, manuals and customer data - i.e., no long paper trails or wait times.

"Mobile field service from a work truck equipment provider means fast diagnostics and troubleshooting, access to repair parts and ease of scheduling any necessary in-shop repairs - but not before you get out of the jam you're in. If they can't fix the problem, they'll get you to someone who can," explains David Dingess, Director - Aftermarket Parts & Accessories at Reading Truck.

REDUCED DOWNTIME

Unplanned downtime means missing deadlines and potentially losing money. Your work truck was built to spec to add productivity to your day. When it's out of commission, it's out of line with your needs and expectations.

Mobile field service is a triage opportunity to help you get what you need faster. Perhaps you're stuck in the field or can't get there at all - a work truck equipment provider meets you right where you are and helps you determine the best next step. Whether the issue lies with their equipment or is completely unrelated, they want to get you back to work faster, since it's their name on your tailgate.

MAKING WORK EASIER

When looking for a work truck equipment partner, consider their after-sale service capabilities and how they can support you in the field. Partners that have mobile service provide you with an extra element of support that can't be overlooked. It's not something that you think about using every day, but are thankful for it when it is there for you.

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BUYING AND SELLING FROM COAST TO COAST

There's no doubt the world of buying and selling commercial vehicles - or anything for that matter - has expanded over the years. While being a local business still means a great deal to each and every community in which a dealership is located, the reality is that selling to customers from across the nation is also common. The benefit here for all of us in the commercial dealership space is that we've effectively expanded our reach beyond our town and state. It also means that if we're looking for a commercial truck or van for one of our customers and we don't have it, we don't have to be shy about searching beyond our city/state borders to find and acquire that commercial vehicle for them.

However, this expansion of our market also introduces new wrinkles, such as the need to transport a vehicle to a customer across the country and the details that go along with doing so. Or, getting a vehicle shipped in for that customer who needs it in your town.

And while you're an expert on the vehicles themselves, transporting those work trucks is an entirely different ballgame. Just like you

"..WHILE YOU'RE AN EXPERT ON THE VEHICLES THEMSELVES, TRANSPORTING THOSE WORK TRUCKS IS AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT BALLGAME "

wouldn't ask your veterinarian to perform heart surgery, you wouldn't want a retail car carrier to handle the logistics of transporting a bucket truck - the chances of success when doing so are not in your favor.

So, in one of our recent podcasts, we invited Alan Levy, founder of Crestline Auto Transport, to spend a few minutes with us talking about the commercial vehicle transportation business. During the conversation, Alan shared a bit of the history of the company, how he got into the commercial/fleet transportation space and a couple fun stories about some of the more unique vehicles they've transported. Most importantly, he also shared his thoughts on some critical components of the transport business, such as:

- Challenges frequently encountered transporting work trucks. For example, you can't load a 30' long, 11' tall dump truck on a traditional double deck auto hauler, but there are some who might try to make this work.
- Some of the questions necessary to ask to ensure accurate transport pricing. Getting as much detail up-front is to your benefit.
- The importance of real time communication and transparency.
- The impact - and approach to consider - of the shipping price on the overall transaction.

If you're selling commercial trucks and vans across the country - or acquiring them nationwide for your customers - consider spending 30 minutes listening to what Alan has to say. You'll surely come away more knowledgeable about vehicle transportation, which may impact not only your bottom line, but also the satisfaction of those nationwide commercial vehicle customers.

[LISTEN HERE](#)



KNAPHEIDE: DEALER RESOURCES

3 CUSTOMER SERVICE TACTICS FOR INCREASING SALES

How many companies are there in your industry? Ten? One thousand? More? What sets you apart from the crowd?

Take a minute to think about it.

Do you have the lowest prices? Are you the best at what you do? Or, is it just that you're the only one around?

Regardless of your answer, unless of course it was "award-winning customer service," you're going to want to keep reading. Below, you'll learn how to identify the different types of customers, the cost of poor customer service and tips that'll improve your customer retention, all of which are important if you want your actions today to help grow your future business.

THE TYPES OF CUSTOMERS

Essentially, there are two types of customers: transactional and relational. Transactional customers are primarily concerned with getting the best price. These are typically one-off customers; unless you always have the lowest prices and best deals. Even then, you can't consider them loyal customers because if someone else offers a lower price for comparable goods or services, they're switching; no hesitation.

On the other hand, you've got relational customers. For these customers, price isn't the biggest consideration. Instead, they're more concerned with relationships, trusting the brands they buy and the people they work with. This is great news because even when someone else offers a lower price, the relational customer is likely to continue working with you because

they know and trust you. This is where those improved customer service skills can really be a game changer; they'll be the difference between gaining/retaining and losing a lifetime customer.



THE COST OF POOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

According to data compiled by [Zippia](#), "91% of customers say they won't willingly do business again with a company that left them unhappy." To make things worse, 61% HAVE switched to competitors after having a bad customer service experience.

So what? You lose a customer; you can totally replace them. Right? There can't be that big of a difference between losing one and acquiring another, after all.

Actually, that's not true. The general consensus is that it's roughly five times more expensive to gain a new customer than it is to retain a current one. Those costs are typically associated with things like marketing and advertising. You also have to consider the types of customers you're losing and replacing them with, as it's not really an apple-to-apple comparison. Transactional customers will come and go, depending on your prices,

while relational customers will be with you for the long haul.

Why is all of this important?

[Zippia's](#) data indicates that about \$75 billion are lost by businesses each year due to poor customer service.

That sounds like a lot of missed money and opportunity.

LEVERAGING CUSTOMER SERVICE AND EXPERIENCE

Now, you're probably wondering what you can do to avoid losing your customers and potential business.

Answers are never one size fits all, but taking steps to implement the tips below will definitely have you on your way to cultivating and strengthening your relationships with current and potential relational customers. Who knows, you may even convert a couple of your transactional ones.

1. MAINTAIN A CRM SYSTEM

According to [Zippia](#), "76% of customers expect to have consistent interactions with a company no matter how many departments they talk to." Further, many customers are frustrated when they have to repeat information after being transferred. A good CRM can be key to creating a seamless process here.

CRMs, or Customer Relationship Management systems, allow users to track relationships and log interactions with current and potential customers. In more robust systems, sales and marketing data are logged and managed, too.

To make the most out of your CRM, while you're chatting with a customer, or potential customer, log

the highlights of your conversation on their profile. This will help, down the road, when they reach back out about issues or using your services again. Then, anyone who helps is instantly able to find all the relevant information they need to be of assistance.

It's also a perfect opportunity to put your CRM to use! Check out your customer's contact record to see what their interests and history are, and send them relevant information about your business or other deals for non-competing businesses they may be interested in.

surveys, comment cards, online reviews, etc. But what's important here is less about how you collect it, and more about putting it to use.

Did you know "53% of customers believe companies don't take any action on customer feedback" ([Zippia](#))?

That's crazy!

So, the next time a customer gives you constructive criticism, don't write them off as an unsatisfied customer that you've lost. Instead, write the comment in your log (maybe your CRM, too), and start thinking of ways that you can improve/resolve whatever their comment pertained to. Showing your customers that you value them, and their input, will go a long way, especially when you take action.

On the other hand, when they mention something they think you've done well, take a mental note (and one on the CRM). These positives are often great ways to sell yourself and your business to potential customers.

Although we're sure you already had most of this down pat, we hope that better knowing your customers and what's important to them will help you better meet their expectations and set your business apart from the competition!

[READ AT KNAPHEIDE.COM/BLOG](https://www.knapheide.com/blog)

"THE GENERAL CONSENSUS IS THAT IT'S ROUGHLY **FIVE** TIMES MORE EXPENSIVE TO GAIN A NEW CUSTOMER THAN IT IS TO RETAIN A CURRENT ONE."

2. MAINTAIN THE RELATIONSHIP, EVEN AFTER THE TRANSACTION

Why? Because strong relationships are what motivate relational customers to keep coming back.

It's important that, even after you complete your sale or render services, you continue reaching out to your customers. Remind them who you are and what working with you can do for them.

Perhaps one of the easiest ways to start is by simply calling your customers afterwards; check in, see if they're happy with their purchase/services and if they have any questions or issues.

3. ASK FOR FEEDBACK, AND ACT ON IT

Customer feedback is an important resource that you should be utilizing. Think about it.

Through that feedback, you are able to determine which areas you excel in and which could use some work. (Your customers are essentially providing you with a run-down of their experience and a blueprint on how to increase their satisfaction with your services. (Increased satisfaction = Increased likelihood of being a loyal customer))

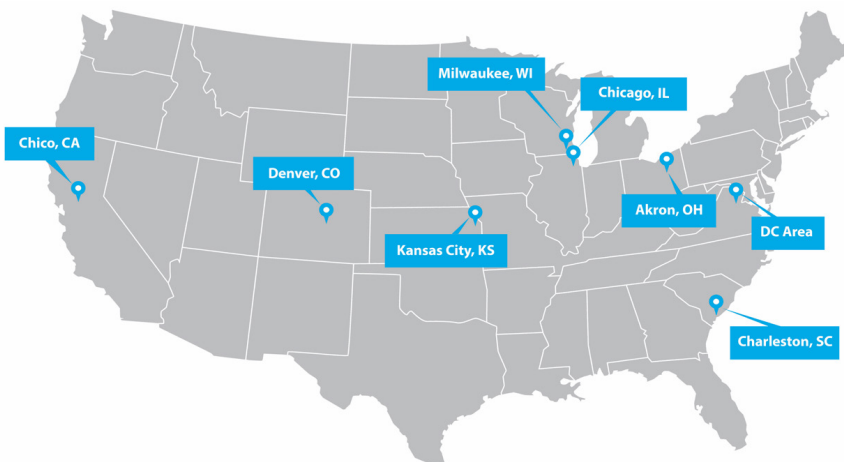
There are many ways to go about collecting customer feedback, like





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MADE IN AMERICA: TRANSFER FLOW INC'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY

As the U.S. recently prepared to commemorate American independence on the 4th of July, Transfer Flow Inc. commemorated its 40th anniversary. It was the perfect time to reflect on the company's rich history, impressive growth, and significant contributions to the fuel system industry. From its humble beginnings to its current position as a leading manufacturer of aftermarket and OEM fuel systems, Transfer Flow has consistently demonstrated a commitment to innovation, quality, and customer satisfaction.

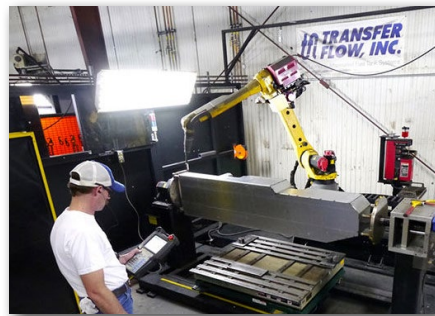


THE JOURNEY

Ground breaking for Transfer Flow in Chico, CA - Founded in 1983, Transfer Flow Inc. began as a small operation in Chico, California, specializing in fuel tanks for recreational vehicles. Over the past four decades, the company has grown exponentially, expanding its product offerings and earning a reputation for excellence in the fuel system industry. Today, Transfer Flow is a trusted name in aftermarket and OEM fuel systems, with products designed for a wide range of applications, from light-duty trucks to heavy-duty commercial vehicles.

Throughout its 40-year history, Transfer Flow has achieved numerous milestones and made significant

contributions to the fuel system industry. One such achievement was the introduction of the first 50-state legal larger replacement fuel tank system for the Ford F-150 gasoline pickup. Additionally, the company has been awarded multiple patents for its innovative fuel system designs, further solidifying its position as a leader in the field.



COMMITMENT TO THE MADE-IN-AMERICA PROMISE

Transfer Flow leaders believe that when customers choose an American-made fuel tank system, they can trust that their product is manufactured to the highest standards using the best materials and techniques. Crafted with 12- and 14-gauge, high-yield U.S. aluminized steel and powder coated for a durable finish, these fuel tank systems are built to last and can withstand the toughest conditions. Transfer Flow's commitment to American-made products ensures that customers receive high-quality, responsible fuel tank systems that adhere to strict safety and environmental standards.

TRANSFER FLOW FUEL TANK

Transfer Flow's American-made fuel tank systems meet or exceed industry safety requirements, providing unmatched reliability and peace of mind, while minimizing the risk of costly repairs. Additionally, these fuel tank systems offer legal benefits, meeting regulation standards for emissions

set by the California Air Resources Board, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the Environmental Protection Agency. Even the fasteners used for tank installation comply with regulations specified by the American National Standards Institute, the National Fire Protection Association, and the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association.

CURRENT STATE AND LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Transfer Flow's current product lineup includes a variety of fuel tanks, fuel system components, and accessories, all designed with the same high-quality standards and attention to detail that have become synonymous with the brand. Some of their most popular products include high-capacity replacement fuel tanks, in-bed auxiliary fuel tanks, and fuel tank/toolbox combos.

As Transfer Flow looks to the future, the company plans to continue innovating and expanding its product offerings to meet the evolving needs of the fuel system industry. With a focus on developing new technologies and improving existing products, Transfer Flow is poised to remain at the forefront of the industry for years to come.

CONCLUSION

Transfer Flow Inc.'s 40th anniversary is a testament to the company's unwavering dedication to innovation, quality, and customer satisfaction. As they celebrate this significant milestone, it's clear that Transfer Flow's impact on the fuel system industry is nothing short of remarkable. With a bright future ahead, there's no doubt that Transfer Flow will continue to set the standard for excellence in the fuel system industry.

[READ AT COMVOY.COM](http://COMVOY.COM)



CAN YOUR COMPANY HELP SOLVE THE CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE PUZZLE WITH V2G?

As the global transition towards electric vehicles (EVs) gains momentum, the need for efficient and accessible charging solutions emerges as a critical challenge. The development of a robust and flexible charging infrastructure is of special concern for widespread adoption within the commercial EV arena, and is going to require the employment of more innovative thinking than what we have seen thus far. One intriguing idea suggests that company EV fleets could play a pivotal role in addressing this challenge, by leveraging Vehicle-to-Grid unidirectional smart charging (V1G) and Vehicle-to-Grid bi-directional (V2G) technology.

These technologies provide an opportunity to decentralize the grid, creating a distributed network of energy resources that could make energy production and distribution more efficient, resilient, and sustainable.

UNDERSTANDING

V1G AND V2G TECHNOLOGY

V1G and V2G are groundbreaking innovations that enable energy flow between EVs and the power grid. In essence, this transformative approach can turn parked vehicles into temporary energy resources for the electricity system.

V1G is a smart charging system that weighs time-of-use for grid optimization, essentially delaying EV charging until off-peak hours. For instance, a vehicle could be plugged in at the end of a shift, say 6pm, but charging may not occur until midnight. Usage during the off-peak hours is both cheaper and causes less strain on the grid.



V2G technology goes beyond V1G by enabling EVs to store excess energy from the grid. This ability is particularly beneficial when there is an overproduction of renewable energy from sources such as wind and solar installations. By storing surplus energy, which can be routed back to the grid, V2G technology can improve grid stability and promote higher integration of renewable energy into the energy mix.

THE ROLE OF COMPANIES IN THE CHARGING

INFRASTRUCTURE CHALLENGE

The current charging infrastructure faces multiple challenges, including limited availability of charging stations, prolonged charging times, and constraints on grid capacity. However, the growing adoption of EVs by companies for their fleets presents a valuable opportunity

for these vehicles to contribute significantly to addressing the charging infrastructure issue.

By harnessing the potential of V1G and V2G technology, company EVs can help alleviate pressures on the grid and facilitate more effective energy management. Additionally, participating companies can benefit from cost savings and potential revenue generation opportunities.

IMPLEMENTING

V1G AND V2G TECHNOLOGY IN COMPANY EV FLEETS

The transition to V1G and V2G integration calls for specific infrastructure adaptations, including the installation of smart charging systems, bi-directional chargers, and the implementation of grid communication protocols. Although the initial setup may seem complex, the potential benefits are substantial.

By participating in V1G and V2G programs, companies can reduce costs and generate revenue by supplying energy back to the grid or storing surplus energy. Furthermore, these practices enhance the sustainability credentials of the participating companies, showcasing them as active contributors to renewable energy distribution, a valuable aspect of their corporate social responsibility strategy.

V2G USE CASE

The Portuguese island of Porto Santo offers an interesting use case, highlighting the successful implementation of V1G and V2G technologies. In a pioneering effort, the island partnered with automobile manufacturer Renault, utility company Empresa de Electricidade da Madeira (EEM), and technology provider The Mobility House to create a first-of-its-kind Smart Fossil Free Island project.

Project Overview

The aim of the project was to transform Porto Santo into a model for sustainable energy production and consumption. Key components of this project

included the integration of renewable energy sources with advanced energy storage solutions, utilizing electric vehicles as mobile energy storage units through V1G and V2G technologies.

Implementation

Renault provided a fleet of electric vehicles which were integrated with V1G and V2G technologies enabling them to send excess energy back to the grid when demand was high or store energy when production exceeded consumption.

EEM, the local utility company, played a vital role in managing the energy produced by the island's solar and wind installations, as well as the energy stored in and supplied by the Renault EVs. EEM utilized advanced forecasting tools to optimize the interaction between renewable energy production, grid capacity, and the EV fleet's charging and energy storage capabilities.

The Mobility House, a technology provider specializing in EV charging solutions, facilitated seamless connectivity between the bidirectional chargers and

the grid. They worked closely with Renault and EEM to ensure optimal V1G and V2G performance, maximizing energy efficiency and grid stability.

Results

The project demonstrated compelling benefits, including reduced reliance on fossil fuels, increased integration of renewable energy sources, and improved grid stability. The EV fleet's utilization of V1G and V2G technologies showcased the potential for decentralized energy management, contributing to an increasingly sustainable energy system for Porto Santo.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, V1G and V2G technology presents a promising piece of the charging infrastructure puzzle. By incorporating company EV fleets into this decentralized model, businesses can make significant strides in energy management and contribute to the overall success of the EV revolution, ultimately enabling a more resilient and sustainable energy system.



COACH KEN

BY KEN TAYLOR, ken@coachkentaylor.com



ALMOST THERE! FACING FAILURE

So, you have been making sales calls with little success. As a result of all the negative news, you have decided to wait around the dealership until more inventory is available and the market picks up. I'm here to tell you that is the worst strategy possible in this or any economic environment. Let's take a quick look at history:

He tried 1,000s of materials to create the invention he knew would change the world. A reporter asked him, "Are you ready to give up?" His reply? I just found 1,000 things that didn't work! I'm 1,000 times closer to success! (Thomas Edison invented the first electric light bulb)

Each day he walked down the docks, to work on his potential invention and each day was ridiculed by dock workers and sailing ship owners. He refused to give up after each failure, knowing he could change the world! (Robert Fulton invented the first steam powered ship and ended the era of commercial sailing ships)

He tried to sell his patent to Western Union Telegraph Company but was laughed at by management. They weren't laughing a few years later! (Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone and started his own company, Bell Telephone)

In 1925, John Logie Baird, gave the first demonstration of his new invention in London, England. Upon hearing of the demonstration, American radio pioneer declared Baird's invention "An impossibility to replace radio" (One year later television was taking the world by storm!)

President Robert F. Kennedy once said, "Only those who dare to fail greatly can ever achieve greatly."

I have been training salespeople for over twenty years and I have found the biggest barrier to success in sales is fear of failing. The word "no" is not a bullet, knife, or baseball bat. It can do no physical harm and with the right attitude it can do no mental harm. When I designed our sales training program at Commercial Truck Training over 20 years ago, I had a belief that still holds true today. With the right strategy and detailed planning, failure is replaced with opportunity. Maybe not today, maybe not next month but you will be rewarded with successes.

**" ONLY THOSE WHO DARE
TO FAIL GREATLY CAN
EVER ACHIEVE GREATLY"**

Robert F. Kennedy

I have been on hundreds of sales calls with commercial sales professionals and ultimate success has come from failing enough times to find out the things that worked and eliminating the things that did not work. As an example, many people think I am against "cold calling." I'm not! I am against totally unplanned sales calls. Here are the keys I have discovered that turn the pain of cold sales calls into "positive interaction between human beings." Follow these steps and you will become a superstar, guaranteed!

1. Work through groups- There is no denying that when you are in the same group as your potential prospect, he or she will feel more obligated to meet with you. Whether it is the Homebuilders Association, Associated General Contractors, the Chamber of Commerce, or a union.
2. Once you sell a vehicle, your best referral source is your new customer! Unfortunately, most salespeople either don't ask for referrals or they ask in the wrong way. If you say to a new customer, "Who do you know that might need a truck or van," in most cases the answer is "I can't think of anyone, but if I do, I'll call you." In most cases that call never comes. Instead ask for the best lead you can ever get, the vendors of that customer. Many commercial salespeople have heard me say the following on a follow up call after they purchased a vehicle where the owner praised you for a job well done. "Now many vendors do you have that service you, where you are the customer?" The business owner always gives you a number (Let's say 12 vendors) The second question is "Do you think they would enjoy the positive service you just mentioned?" They always say yes! Congratulations, you just got 15 referrals!

3. Follow up, follow up, and more follow up- After you meet a potential customer, send a thank you card and follow up with a phone call. Ask if you can put the person on your mailing list and have a way to stay in contact. We do this for our customers through our electronic newsletter. Dealer after dealer tells us the great results they get.
4. When you attend meetings always have two to three targeted prospects you want to meet. I like to ask the host or organizer of the event if they know any of the prospects on the targeted list. If they do I ask him or her to introduce me. I start a conversation that is "question based" meaning it is all about them not me. At the end of the conversation I always say, "I would love to see your operation some time." Yes, you get an appointment when they reply, "Come by anytime."
5. Ask for the opportunity to quote- After you have had the pleasant conversation, have secured an appointment, and visited their business, ask: "The next time you are in the market for a vehicle I would love to supply you with a quote to give you an idea of how we can assist you." I cannot tell you how many times I have asked that question and received a positive response!
6. Turn prospects into customers and customers into friends- Friends don't shop around, friends recommend you to other potential customers, friends enjoy your company! Get to know your customer on a personal basis. Know their spouses name if he or she is married, know their children's names, know their birthday, know where they are from and their work history. Even know their favorite hobby, sports team, or other interests.
7. Be straightforward and honest- Integrity is the greatest talent any of us can possess.

There's more but these seven steps will supercharge your business! The famous motivational speaker and writer, Denis Waitley once wrote, "Failure should be our teacher, not our undertaker. Failure is delay, not defeat. It is a temporary detour, not a dead end. Failure is something we can avoid only by saying nothing, doing nothing, and being nothing." You know what? Denis is right!

For more information about Ken Taylor & Associates' Commercial Automotive Consulting program call 1-904-535-9996, email at ken@coachkentaylor.com or will@commercialtrucktraining.com or visit them at www.coachkentaylor.com

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DEALERSHIP SUCCESS

Shawn Horswill - Work Truck Solutions, SR VP of Product

REV UP SHOPPER ENGAGEMENT



How do you unleash the full potential of your commercial dealership and outmaneuver the relentless competition? Well, in today's world, that doesn't necessarily mean having a vast on-lot inventory for shoppers to choose from. Those days may never

So, instead of asking when stocking levels will return to pre-pandemic levels, ask yourself these six questions to help your dealership survive and thrive in the digital age.

"THERE ARE WAYS TO ATTRACT COMMERCIAL PROSPECTS OTHER THAN MAINTAINING A YELLOWSTONE PARK-SIZED HERD OF WORK TRUCKS"

return. There are ways to attract commercial prospects other than maintaining a Yellowstone Park-sized herd of work trucks. Instead, look for growth by encouraging shoppers to engage with your product online.

Your ability to attract, engage, and ultimately convert fleeting prospects into loyal customers should be a top priority. Your dealership is now more than just a physical location where people can see your product and check out the competition. It's also an online destination that attracts potential customers nationwide.

1 Does your dealership website maintain enough SEO content to rank well in online searches?

Ranking high for the kinds of vehicles your target market is searching for is critical in the modern world. You can't engage and convert prospects until you've attracted them to your site. SEO-rich content is a tried and true tactic to improve visibility with internet search engines.

2 Does your website provide a "Garage" type option where shoppers can save vehicles they're interested in?

This is a great way to foster engagement and inform a database. If you've shopped for anything online that allowed you to "save" the item of interest, you know what I'm talking about. You. Will. Return.

3 Does your website provide easy entry into the pre-order funnel?

Easing the path to pre-sales is critical to success in the new-normal supply chain. Easy steps on your website for shoppers to accomplish this will pay dividends in market-qualified leads.

4 Are you offering maintenance and repair services tailored to commercial customer needs?

Commercial customers need to get their vehicles repaired or serviced quickly and efficiently, so they can get back on the road. If you're not offering these services, you're missing out on opportunities to build relationships and close deals.

"YOU CAN'T ENGAGE AND CONVERT PROSPECTS UNTIL YOU'VE ATTRACTED THEM TO YOUR SITE. SEO-RICH CONTENT IS A TRIED AND TRUE TACTIC TO IMPROVE VISIBILITY WITH INTERNET SEARCH ENGINES."

5 Are you integrating vehicle delivery into your value chain?

It's common for commercial customers and their desired vehicles to be in different locales. A ready transportation option available and visible on your web pages is one of those positive CX experiences that encourage conversions.

6 Are you including financing options into your online mix?

Like the transportation issue, having a ready financing option available and visible on your web pages eases the path to conversion. Just ensure your option includes an organization with deep expertise in commercial vehicles.

We've just looked at six strategies to rev up shopper engagement on your website—vital for a commercial dealership to thrive in the 21st Century. The future of your dealership may very well depend on how well you master these techniques. So, buckle up and shift your online presence into high gear.

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CUP o' JOE SEIZE THE PROBLEM: OPPORTUNITY IN FULL DISGUISE!



This very day, I got a call from an agency in New York(!) that I supplied an F150 with a food delivery system that arrived this week. He (John) had a problem that could be solved if I and my dealership could react quickly (before the MSO was assigned). Sounds simple enough, but the paperwork said they were "Meals on Wheels...so-and-so town, Inc." So, what's the problem? The MSO, to satisfy the good people in New York DOL, AND the insurer of Meals, MUST include the word "of." Small problem. Huge opportunity for me!

First problem solved: I called John back immediately, we talked about it, and the MSO will go to them tomorrow, properly worded.

If I hadn't called him back immediately, my dealership would have ended up asking Ford for a copy of the MSO, and in a week or two we would have been able to send that corrected one to them.

What's glaring here, as you drill down, I found that "they" are qualified for a Government FIN Code, as greater than 60% of their funding is from government sources (local, regional, national), and wouldn't be restricted if they had fewer than 15 vehicles.

It turns out this entity has **MORE THAN TWENTY** vehicles registered. Next opportunity is that I can assist John in their Meals entity getting a GovFIN code, and save them substantial funds, not from my dealership but from Ford itself: no profit lost for me, just huge savings for this fine organization.

ONCE I HAVE DONE THAT, when Meals in New York wants to buy another Ford of any kind, who do you think they will call first? You and I know the answer.

They will start with the dealer (on the West Coast—mine) that reached out, and looked out for them. They will be able to use their precious funds to help the needy, having saved between \$300 (E3F) and \$4,000 (F1C, F1E)!

I'm John's new best friend.

Now, look out at the opportunity in (1) calling the concerned customer back **IMMEDIATELY**. Even if you don't know the answer, you can listen, tell them you're sorry and point them in a direction for a solution.

**AND ANOTHER
ONE JUST YESTERDAY**

A customer called me yesterday from Northern CA. Since the wisdom of the CA government requires it, the NEW E350 was not purchased from a CA dealership, it needed to be smog tested (I know!) They took it in, and it failed(!). The person there recommended that they drive it a few miles then try again. They put 50 miles on it: still failed. It has to go to a Ford dealer to get it figured out. The first appointment service had for them is a little over two weeks away.

I HAVE DONE ALL I CAN

I called her back immediately. I offered the only solutions I am aware of (short of driving it some 400 miles to my dealership). Now, the next time this client needs a vehicle, do you think they will immediately think to call the local Ford dealer that put them on the schedule in 16 days? Or will they call the guy/dealer (me/Northside) that called them back instantly?

**WE BOTH KNOW THE ANSWER:
CALL BACK AND SEIZE THE
OPPORTUNITY!!!**

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Francis Hopping

Fleet Manager, Corning Ford

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