

SEMA

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THE WRAP

LTAAs Member Newsletter

Already?

In the previous issue of LTAAs *The Wrap*, Ron DiVincenzo remarked that he couldn't believe his two-year term as LTAAs Chairman was over. Well, guess what, Ron? I can't believe it either! It seems like only yesterday that Ron called to congratulate me on being elected to the Chair-Elect position in the LTAAs and here we are already, two full years later.

I attended my first LTAAs (then TCAA) long-range planning meeting in 2000, and I was immediately hooked on the association as a way to network and learn more about an industry that, at the time, we at TruXedo knew very little about. In 2003 I was elected to the Select Committee and have been active ever since.

There is a seemingly endless list of people in the LTAAs that I owe thanks to, for their advice, support and mentoring over the years.

I cannot imagine a more capable mentor than Immediate-Past Chair Ron DiVincenzo. He treated me as a teammate from the first day, and I can't thank him enough. I am also pleased to be working with new Chair-Elect George Lathouris of Keystone, and I hope I can give him the same support that was afforded me. George is a tireless worker and advocate of not only SEMA and LTAAs, but of the light-truck industry as a whole.

As of press time, we are still a month away from the 2009 LTAAs Long-Range Planning Meeting in July. While we are sure to come away from the LRP with some specific projects and short-range goals, our overall focus will continue to be the development of learning and educational resources for the LTAAs membership. As owners and employees of companies in this industry, it's critical that we learn how to do what we do better every day.

It's unfortunate that the newly developed Technical Skills and Training Conference was postponed due to 2008's economic challenges. The TSTC was developed as an improved educational tool that replaced the SEMA Spring Expo, and we will continue efforts to develop such programs. We must continue to bring learning opportunities to our membership in ways that are cost-effective, beneficial and meaningful. Only in that way will we continue to grow as an association and have the opportunity to continue to add value to our membership.

As business managers and owners, it is critical that we reach out to our fellow business acquaintances, new and old, to learn from them, to share our stories of success and failure and to discover those new business opportunities that come from these interactions.



Kelly Kneifl
Chairman, LTAAs Select Committee

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I believe that if you turn inward during difficult economic times and focus only on yourself, you ignore the opportunities around you and limit your ability to grow.

In closing this, my first Chairmans Letter for *The Wrap*, I want to emphasize that your LTAAs Select Committee is committed to you, the member companies. At press time, I did not know who the newly elected Select Committee members were. But their contact information and mine are always available on www.sema.org/ltaa. Please, please, please do not hesitate to reach out to any of us with ideas, comments, suggestions or questions. You can also contact our SEMA Staff Liaison, Jim Skelly, for any needs. Don't wait for the SEMA Show or LRP to speak out. In this age of immediate communication, we are only a few keystrokes or a phone call away. Now, let's get busy!

Respectfully,

Kelly Kneifl
Chairman, LTAAs Select Committee

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TOP-SELLING TRUCKS

JANUARY–MAY 2009 VS. 2008

Make	Model	Jan.–May 2009	Jan.–May 2008	% Change
Top 20 Selling Crossover-Utility Vehicles (CUVs)				
Honda	CR-V	65,197	89,017	-26.8%
Ford	Escape	61,017	76,966	-20.7%
Toyota	RAV4	52,187	61,919	-15.7%
Ford	Edge	33,531	58,734	-42.9%
Chevrolet	Traverse	33,390	-	N/A
Lexus	RX-Series	32,614	36,690	-11.1%
Nissan	Rogue	31,344	30,812	1.7%
Subaru	Forester	30,068	21,739	38.3%
Toyota	Highlander	29,320	54,517	-46.2%
Hyundai	Santa Fe	26,325	31,547	-16.6%
Chevrolet	HHR	24,531	39,692	-38.2%
Nissan	Murano	23,800	37,331	-36.2%
GMC	Acadia	22,726	34,072	-33.3%
Dodge	Journey	22,153	17,569	26.1%
Chevrolet	Equinox	21,043	34,690	-39.3%
Buick	Enclave	17,105	18,771	-8.9%
Toyota	Venza	15,942	-	N/A
Kia	Sportage	15,867	17,251	-8.0%
Ford	Flex	15,277	-	N/A
Saturn	VUE	14,962	36,884	-59.4%
Total CUV Sales		814,064	1,088,063	-25.2%

Make	Model	Jan.–May 2009	Jan.–May 2008	% Change
Top 20 Selling Sport-Utility Vehicles (SUVs)				
Jeep	Wrangler	44,080	39,773	10.8%
Honda	Pilot	34,127	48,194	-29.2%
Chevrolet	Tahoe	28,101	41,767	-32.7%
Jeep	Liberty	19,890	35,917	-44.6%
Jeep	Grand Cherokee	19,467	36,739	-47.0%
Kia	Sorento	14,547	9,307	56.3%
Ford	Explorer	14,069	31,368	-55.1%
Chevrolet	Suburban	12,763	22,372	-43.0%
GMC	Yukon	12,521	16,041	-21.9%
Toyota	4Runner	9,371	24,282	-61.4%
Dodge	Nitro	8,414	21,321	-60.5%
Toyota	Sequoia	7,910	14,100	-43.9%
Ford	Expedition	7,611	19,892	-61.7%
Nissan	Pathfinder	7,218	15,630	-53.8%
Toyota	FJ Cruiser	6,809	14,961	-54.5%
Cadillac	Escalade	6,506	10,112	-35.7%
Nissan	Xterra	6,238	14,033	-55.5%
Chevrolet	TrailBlazer	6,138	30,117	-79.6%
GMC	Yukon XL	5,709	10,502	-45.6%
Mercedes-Benz	GL-Class	5,440	9,537	-43.0%
Total SUV Sales		329,929	602,190	-45.2%

Top 20 Selling Pickups				
Chevrolet	Silverado	100,146	157,625	-36.5%
Ford	F-Series Light Duty	86,229	141,555	-39.1%
Ford	F-Series Super Duty	52,939	85,397	-38.0%
Dodge	Ram Pickup Light Duty	49,624	69,933	-29.0%
Toyota	Tacoma	44,126	72,704	-39.3%
GMC	Sierra	32,022	55,197	-42.0%
Toyota	Tundra	30,919	66,278	-53.3%
Dodge	Ram Pickup Heavy Duty	30,414	42,862	-29.0%
Chevrolet	Silverado HD	25,037	39,405	-36.5%
Ford	Ranger	21,113	36,421	-42.0%
Chevrolet	Colorado	13,999	26,509	-47.2%
Nissan	Frontier	10,108	21,173	-52.3%
GMC	Sierra HD	9,031	15,568	-42.0%
Nissan	Titan	7,514	15,925	-52.8%
Honda	Ridgeline	6,164	17,152	-64.1%
Dodge	Dakota	6,098	14,936	-59.2%
Chevrolet	Avalanche	5,801	15,652	-62.9%
Ford	Explorer Sport Trac	5,046	11,748	-57.0%
GMC	Canyon	4,429	6,923	-36.0%
Mitsubishi	Raider	1,227	903	35.9%
Total Pickup Sales		545,622	920,334	-40.7%

Top 15 Selling Vans				
Honda	Odyssey	41,884	59,987	-30.2%
Ford	E-Series	36,857	63,869	-42.3%
Chrysler	Town & Country	36,559	57,973	-36.9%
Dodge	Caravan	35,927	61,591	-41.7%
Toyota	Sienna	32,972	57,692	-42.8%
Chevrolet	Express	20,846	33,662	-38.1%
Kia	Sedona	17,632	12,601	39.9%
Mazda	Mazda5	9,194	10,561	-12.9%
GMC	Savana	6,793	10,065	-32.5%
Volkswagen	Routan	6,191	-	N/A
Nissan	Quest	4,044	8,428	-52.0%
Hyundai	Entourage	3,300	2,533	30.3%
Dodge	Dodge Sprinter	2,147	6,913	-68.9%
Chevrolet	Uplander	1,213	28,221	-95.7%
Buick	Terraza	19	362	-94.8%
Total Van Sales		255,583	414,624	-38.4%

Source: SEMA Research & Information Center

MOVERS & SHAKERS

HELLWIG PRODUCTS CO. INC. is working with "Motorz TV," both as a Partz sponsor for the most recent episodes and as a contributor of how-to tech. **Chris Duke**, "Motorz's" host, is true to his mission of showing enthusiasts how to install aftermarket products with simple hand tools in their own garage. Chris invited **Dave Wheeler**, Hellwig's engineer, to join him in the studio (Chris's Garage), and the two installed a Hellwig Sway Bar. During the show they gave great installation tips, and they even produced a "before" and "after" video. You can watch the Hellwig installation video by logging on to: www.motorz.tv/play/hellwig_sway_bar_installation. Chris's other instructional videos are also available on "Motorz TV," which is accessible through its website (www.motorz.tv) or on iTunes, YouTube, Streetfire.com, and many other websites.

In more Hellwig news, **Melanie Hellwig** has become an LTAA Select Committee Member. "When

my great grandfather and grandfather founded Hellwig Products in 1946, they set out to manufacture the industry's best helper spring," said Melanie. "Since then, they have added new innovations such as sway bars, air springs, RV stabilizers and a Toyhauler racking system. Four years ago, when I joined the Hellwig team as part of a new generation, I sought to continue their tradition of manufacturing and innovation.

"I wanted to be a part of the LTAA Select Committee because I see the Committee members as a driving force of my market. My goals during my term include helping create a powerful SEMA Spring Education Conference, assist in growing educational opportunities for the light-truck industry and offer creative solutions to cope with our changing market.

"I'm excited to be a member of the Select Committee, and I am grateful and honored by the support of LTAA and its members. As a member of the aftermarket's new generation, I look forward to meeting the challenges of our industry, and I encourage others to find time to join me."



TRUCK COVERS USA has

introduced the new, 2009 American X-Box. This innovative product adds the protection of LINE-X® XTRA, a spray-on urethane coating fortified with DuPont™ KEVLAR®, to an American Work Cover (a toolbox and Roll Cover combined into one handy unit). The LINE-X permanently bonds to the tool box inside and out, providing a weather-tight seal to protect against extreme heat, cold, moisture, abrasion and rust. The increased tensile strength rating makes the American X-Box resistant to scratches, gouges and punctures. This is a tool box and truck cover that really works!

PILOT AUTOMOTIVE of City of Industry, California, announced the opening of its first East Coast distribution center. Pilot already operates several sales offices in

the eastern United States along with five distribution centers in California. According to Pilot COO **Mitch Williams**, "Freight and time are both limiting factors for a West Coast company in serving the customers in the east as quickly and as cost-effectively as possible, especially for certain types of products." Pilot decided to locate selected products closer to the customers as a part of its ongoing Continual Improvement Initiative.

Williams added, "We already have about 400,000 square feet in California, so this was a good time to add space in the eastern United States. In this economy you have to work harder and smarter to get the business, and we are very excited about the growth opportunities that this facility represents for us."



THE SEMA BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

A Brighter Future Through Education and Cooperation

The SEMA Business Technology Committee (BTC) exists to help SEMA members make the right technology decisions. The BTC's goal is to expand selling opportunities and cut costs through the use of standards and the right technologies for SEMA businesses. Our industry is perhaps more complex than any other when it comes to electronic information exchange and product data standards, as our product qualification information is as varied as the customers that we serve. While other industries have quickly adopted and implemented successful standards, ours struggles with this critical mission as each of us and our companies have an almost infinite variety of needs and requirements. It is absolutely critical, however, to our future success that we immediately address this deficiency and work together toward a solution.

Manufacturers, WDS, jobbers and retailers

who have taken the time to get their data into industry-standard formats are experiencing company-wide benefits. Here are just a few:

- **Complete product information helps sell more parts.**
- **Accurate information reduces unnecessary phone calls.**
- **Reduction of data entry errors and inaccurate fitments reduce the number of returns.**
- **All products experience increased speed to market.**
- **Accurate pricing information improves profitability.**
- **Complete product information allows customers to make better buying decisions.**
- **Improved inventory efficiency reduces costs.**
- **Sales people migrate towards clean and accurate information.**
- **Fewer lost sales thanks to increased product awareness.**

The full potential of these benefits cannot be realized, however, until standards acceptance is universal. The benefits enjoyed by those already working on or within the standards are but a drop in the bucket.

SEMA encourages everyone to learn more about the BTC and how it can improve your business by visiting www.sema.org/btc or calling 909/396-0289, extension 109. The committee is comprised of volunteers from every corner of the industry who are dedicated to improving business in the aftermarket not only through the use of technology, but by encouraging cooperation and understanding among all market segments. We invite all LTAA members and guests interested in learning more about data standards and information exchange, or in the promotion and advancement of the same, to contact the BTC and get involved today.

LTAA DEALER SPOTLIGHT

QUALITY BUMPER COMPANY

Company History

Quality Bumper Company, Inc. was founded in 1968 and is one of Arizona's leading suppliers and installers of automotive and truck accessories. We have a huge inventory (more than \$1.5 million) and operate four full-service retail stores in Arizona.



Why are you a member of the LTAA?

We have been involved in the LTAA for about 25 years, since its beginning as TCIA. LTAA keeps us in the loop regarding what is going on in the market, and it is a great place for information. It

is also a great place for us to be involved with other members of our industry.

How is your business in 2009 compared to 2008?

Our business has leveled out in 2009.

What product lines are you having success with?

We are still having success with towing accessories, a variety of bed covers and bed protection. Since people are holding onto their old vehicles instead of buying new ones, they are spending money dressing them up a little. Instead of going on expensive vacations, they

choose to camp or go to local lakes, which opens the need for our types of accessories.

What have you learned in 2009 that will help in 2010?

Diversify! We've added new items that we never looked at before. Most of all we've learned that you must have your "A" movers on the shelf, or be creative and be able to get them quick so the customer doesn't look elsewhere.

What new products or services are you carrying/offering this year that you have not carried in the past?

LED taillights are something we've never sold before, but we are having a lot of success with this flashier aftermarket product.

What is your projection for business in 2010?

We are projecting a flat year.

What advice do you have for people who want to get into the truck accessory business?

We would advise those looking to break into the truck accessories market now to be cautious and hold off. This is a tough market and a bad time. Starting a new business at any time is difficult, but especially during these rocky times. Being in business for more than 40 years has allowed us to weather the bad months.

Business:	Quality Bumper Co., Inc. 1210 Grand Ave. Phoenix, AZ 85007
Owner:	Ken Page
Number of years in business:	41
Number of Employees:	34
Number of Years in LTAA:	25
Number of Locations:	4