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Services & Solutions for Successful Equipment & Hardware Retailers!

NEWS RELEASE

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SOUTHWESTERN ENDORSES NEW TRAINING PROGRAM PROGRAM OFFERS FREE MYSTERY SHOPPING TO MEMBERS

Kansas City, MO - The SouthWestern Association board of directors has approved a partnership with Creative Sales Solutions (CSS) to provide sales training to dealers.

The new SouthWestern Mystery Shopping and Sales Training Program will be administered by CSS. The Florida-based company will work with participating SouthWestern Association members to provide sales training for parts and service personnel.

The program involves mystery shopping calls to dealerships. These calls evaluate how parts and service employees interact with customers.

"We developed the program to help employees improve their skills to build stronger and more profitable relationships with customers," says Jim Facente, CSS president. "We've mystery shopped more than 1,000 parts and service employees throughout North America and we've trained these employees to use sound techniques to achieve greater success."

Doug Neufeld, CEO, Prairieland Partners, Hutchinson, Kan., and immediate past president of the SouthWestern board, was among a group of board members who evaluated the program.

"I believe the program could help change some basic behaviors of the frontline people in a dealership's parts and service departments," says Neufeld. "The main reason I believe it will have success is because it will bring awareness to employees in how they present themselves and their dealerships to the people they speak with on the phone."

As part of the agreement between SouthWestern and CSS, a special offer is extended to all members of the association.

"CSS has agreed to mystery shop up to three employees for each association member at no charge," says Jeff Flora, CEO, SouthWestern Association. "This offer will give SouthWestern

members the opportunity to learn free of charge how some of their parts and service people score when compared to the successful employees mystery shopped and trained by CSS.”

Flora says the CSS agreement also calls for special pricing for association members who choose to invest in additional training offered through the SouthWestern Mystery Shopping Program.

“The SouthWestern board heard numerous examples of mystery shopping calls CSS made to dealerships,” adds Flora. “The calls revealed there is a great need for training even among veteran dealership employees. CSS offers a program that produces results and the board believes the mystery shopping program is a good addition to SouthWestern’s menu of dealer education and training.”

To learn more about the free mystery shopping offer or to get more information about the SouthWestern Mystery Shopping and Sales Training Program, visit:
<http://www.swassn.com/education/MysteryShopping.html>
or call SouthWestern Association at 800-762-5616.

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About the SouthWestern Association: Founded in 1889, the SouthWestern Association represents farm, construction, industrial and outdoor power equipment dealers, as well as hardware retailers. Led by CEO Jeffrey H. Flora, the association spans eight states ó Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas.

The largest regional trade association of its kind in North America, the SouthWestern Association offers members a comprehensive array of dealer-oriented legislative, educational and communications services, ranging from lobbying to legal, accounting and marketing support. Visit www.swassn.com for more information.