

South Western Flash

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Upcoming Events of Interest

Dealers of Tomorrow

Workshops:

- Aug. 5-6 - Emporia, Kan.
- Oct. 14-15 - San Antonio, Tex.

Plumbing and Electrical Seminars

- Aug. 21-22 - St. Louis, Mo.
- Aug. 25-26 - Wichita, Kan.

North American Retail Hardware Association's Nation Convention

- July 28-30 - Monterey, Calif.

South Western Association

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If not, send us your e-mail address.

We will forward important

Association correspondence to your attention via e-mail. Please

register your e-mail address at:

www.swassn.com/register-email.htm

Employment Practices

NEW FORM I-9 EMPLOYMENT ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

By John M. Neyens, Esq. with the law firm of Seigfreid, Bingham, Levy, Selzer & Gee, P.C.

In 2007, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services issued a new Form I-9 and implemented new Employment Eligibility Verification requirements, effective as of December 26, 2007. The new Form I-9 is available for download on the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services website, at the following link: <http://www.uscis.gov/i-9>. All employers should now be using the new Form I-9, and discontinue use of the old form.

Under the new rules, employers may now sign and retain Forms I-9 electronically. Further, employees cannot be required to provide their Social Security Numbers in connection with the employment eligibility verification process, unless the employer participates in the E-Verify Employment Eligibility Verification Program. E-Verify is an Internet-based system operated by the Department of Homeland Security in partnership with the Social Security Administration that allows participating employers to electronically verify the employment eligibility of their newly hired employees. E-Verify is a free and voluntary program, and is the best means available for determining employment eligibility of new hires and the validity of their Social Security Numbers.

Oftentimes in situations where newly hired employees will be required to have a valid drivers license as an essential condition of their job, employers will want the employees to provide a drivers license as part of the employment eligibility verification process. Drivers licenses are listed in the Form I-9 instructions as one of many types of acceptable documents to verify employment eligibility (together with another listed acceptable document, as specified in the instructions). It is very important to remember, however, that employers are prohibited from specifying which of the listed acceptable documents they will accept from an employee in connection with the Form I-9 employment eligibility verification process.

Accordingly, when a new employee is required to have a valid drivers license as an essential condition of his or her job, but the employee does not voluntarily provide his or her drivers license in connection with the Form I-9 employment eligibility verification process, then the employer should request the license only after completion of the Form I-9 using other acceptable listed documents, in accordance with the instructions.

If you have any questions regarding the new Form I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification requirements, then please call the Association on the legal hotline at 1-800-762-5616.

Plumbing & Electrical Seminars

August 21-22 – St. Peters, Mo.

August 25-26 – Wichita, Kan.

These seminars are designed to present product knowledge through a combination of classroom and hands-on training, as well as teaching selling skills to retail salespeople. Both beginners and experienced store personnel will benefit greatly from Bob Aiken's 35+ years of retail electrical and plumbing experience. Attendees will leave with a better understanding of plumbing and/or electrical products and their uses, and be able to sell the correct items to consumers.

Day 1 – How to Sell Plumbing Supplies

- How a plumbing system works
- Types of shock arrestors and why they are needed.
- Valves-different types and their specific uses
- Selling and repairing faucets
- Different types of pipes and where you can use them- CPVC, PVC, Copper, PEX, PE, ABS and PB
- Soldering
- Installing a garbage disposal, dishwasher, air-gaps, ice-maker and under-sink drainage and water heaters

Day 2 – How to Sell Electrical Supplies

- How an electrical system works
- The difference between 120 Volts and 240 Volts
- Dryer and range wiring – 4 wire vs. 3 wire
- Understanding electrical panels and grounding
- Breaker types and uses – what can be used where
- Fuses – types and uses
- Cables, cords and uses.
- Metal vs. plastic boxes, and how to select the right size and type.
- Wiring a variety of residential circuits.
- Understanding receptacles and switches, including GFCIs and AFCIs, single-pole, double-pole, three-way switches.

Who Should Attend

Anyone involved in selling plumbing or electrical products in a retail environment.

Registration Fees

Members: \$350 for first person - \$325 for each add'l from same company; \$225 for Day 1 or Day 2 separately.

Nonmembers: \$450 for first person - \$425 for each add'l from same company; \$325 for Day 1 or Day 2 separately
Fees include lunch, breaks and handout materials.

Don't delay - \$50 surcharge added after August 1st.

Contact Olivia Holcombe at SouthWestern Association, 800-762-5616, for more information.

Dealers of Tomorrow - 2008 Seminars

Mark your calendar and make plans now to attend the 2008 Dealers of Tomorrow Seminars. Scheduled for Tuesday-Wednesday, **August 5-6**, in **Emporia, Kansas**, and Tuesday-Wednesday, **October 14-15**, in **San Antonio, Texas**. These programs are planned by dealers for dealers with the goal of providing education today to prepare your key personnel for leadership tomorrow. This workshop is for owners, mid-level managers, department managers, and key dealership personnel, and will teach participants how a dealership's operating approach and employee attitudes can affect the dealership on a day-to-day basis and impact its future success. Consider bringing several staff members so they can share ideas and return to implement them at your dealership.

Dealership and Department Development

This year's programs will focus on two distinct but related half-day programs presented by **John Spader**, of Spader Management Group. John Spader has worked closely with individual businesses in a variety of industries located in several countries as a small business management resource provider and Spader 20-Group facilitator. He is one of the primary instructors of the popular Total Management Workshop and also presents various other workshops and seminars related to business management.

The two programs will be *"Four Key Stages of Dealership and Department Development"* and *"Hiring, Managing and Developing People for High Performance."* "Four Key Stages" is a higher-level viewpoint of the dealership and its departments, designed to help people step back and look at the whole dealership or department from a strategic point of view. Its focus is on understanding where you are now, where you want to go and how to get from here to there.

One of the assessments in this session provides the key questions and benchmarks to evaluate when deciding if the dealership should focus on stability or growth, including the roadmap to growing a balanced and sustainable business. This program will include strategies to deal with communication issues in a multi-store structure to help employees provide a consistent level of service to customers.

Focus On Your People

The second half of the training, "Hiring, Managing and Developing People for High Performance" will focus on the most important component of your dealership – your people. In this action-packed half-day, we will use case study employees to illustrate the powerful Hiring and Developing Winners (HDW) Process developed by Dr. Michael O'Connor.

Continued on next page

2007 Cost of Doing Business Report

It is that time of year again - time for the SouthWestern Association Cost of Doing Business Survey (CODB) compilation.

- Participants can compare their financial performance to that of all dealers (regardless of lines or manufacturers represented);
- Dealers/Members need this information to assist in the valuation process of their businesses for estate planning, buy/sell agreements; sales, mergers/consolidation purposes;
- The CODB Report will include benchmarks in the survey so that dealership goals and budgets can be established for future years;
- A trade association should establish the tradition of generating this type of survey so that trends in business can be established and information can be gleaned that will help dealers improve financial performance in future years.

Financial Statements Returned Later Than July 31, 2008 will NOT Be Included in the 2007 Report! If you have questions regarding the Survey please contact Bob or Curt at the Association office - 800-762-5616.

Dealers of Tomorrow Seminars Continued from page 2

We will review how dealerships have traditionally created job descriptions and conducted performance reviews. Then, we'll learn how to implement the Hiring and Developing Winners process by completing a HDW-based performance evaluation on the same case study employees.

Special bonus activity: A unique part of the program in Emporia, Kan., will be a tour of PrairieLand Partners, Inc. (formerly Deer Trail Implement), a John Deere dealership whose facilities were recently built and have been featured in industry magazines. This is your chance to see this modern, efficient dealership firsthand.

The programs are presented by **Federated Insurance**; other sponsors are: **High Plains Journal**, **NAEDA Financial, Ltd.**, **Fastline Publications**, **Equipment Insurance International (EII)**, **IRON Solutions, LLC**, and **DIS**. Program details have been mailed and posted to the SWA web site - www.swassn.com. Plan to attend this informative program in either location. You'll learn the skills and concepts you'll need to take you to the next level. And, you'll have the opportunity to meet and network with other dealers/managers like you. "Dealers of Tomorrow" is a special initiative of South Western Association. The mission of the Dealers of Tomorrow is to provide education for the next generation. Be a part of this exciting program. For more information, please call the Association office at 800-762-5616.



Thanks to Toolchex, technicians are taking home more of what they make.



"Thanks to my employer for providing Toolchex as an employee benefit. It has made a big impact on my take home pay this year."

Luis Navarro Technician

Benefits for Technicians and Dealerships:

- The Toolchex employee benefit can help dealerships retain valuable technicians by allowing them to take home an average of \$150 more each month.
- Toolchex can save dealerships an average of \$750 in employment taxes per technician per year.
- Toolchex can reduce payroll costs and premiums based on total payroll (workers' compensation, shop owners liability insurance, general liability insurance, etc.).



Helping Dealers Succeed.

This program is endorsed by the North American Equipment Dealers Association

Consult your tax advisors regarding the tax considerations with respect to adopting or participating in the Toolchex accountable plan. © 2004 Copyright Toolchex, Inc.

800.498.2256 or visit www.toolchex.com

Credit Card Processing Rates - Don't Be Fooled By Numbers

We recently received the type of credit card promotion that gets more merchants in trouble than perhaps any other.

The post card we received had 1.33 percent emblazoned on the front of the promotion in large, bright red numbers. In the upper left corner of the card was printed "Accept Credit Cards." If you only looked at the front of the card, it would be easy to assume it was an offer to merchants to process credit cards at 1.33 percent.

On the backside of the card, we found, "More profit on credit card sales! The lowest merchant fees for businesses!" Again, the 1.33 percent showed up like a lightning bolt. But, we also noticed some of the smallest wording on the card was "of VISA/MASTERCARD DEBIT SALES," which was printed directly under the screaming rate of 1.33 percent.

If a merchant accepted the rate as fact, and nothing suggested it wasn't fact, it did not reflect what the merchant might pay for processing non-debit transactions. But the 1.33 percent is a head-turning number and many merchants (and we're not pointing fingers) often leap at such offers but later have an "Oh, I didn't realize that" moment.

More Than Just Numbers

It wasn't the number that caught our attention – it was the wording under the number because it only applied to debit-based transactions. Is 1.33 percent a low rate? In some cases, it most certainly is. But following is how the offer and other details about the promotion compare to the association program, administered by Elavon (formerly NOVA).

Post card promotion: The processing rate is 1.33 percent (plus 29 cents) of the sales transaction on debit card transactions.

Association program: True debits, which occur when a customer confirms the transaction using a PIN number, are processed at

56 cents for sales under \$25; 70 cents for sales greater than \$25 but less than \$55; and 85 cents for sales above \$55. There are no additional fees on these transactions.

Post card promotion: The credit card terminal displayed on the post card is an Omni 3730, an excellent terminal, priced at \$395. NAEDA's price is lower for an Omni 3730 LE, a slightly better version that features an internal PINpad to process debit cards. The 3730 requires an external PINpad, which may cost as much as \$150.

Continued on page 10



It's time to enjoy the fruits of your labor.

There's no denying that you've worked hard and sacrificed a lot for your business.

Now it's time to get your life back and take control so you can run your business, instead of your business running you.

Spader Business Management offers innovative solutions like Total Management 1 and 2 workshops, 20 Groups, and consulting programs that can take your company to new levels of performance and improve life-work balance for you and your employees. Which ultimately allows you to work on your business instead of in your business.

For more information and to see what Spader can do for you, visit spader.com, or call 800.772.3377. You and your family will be glad you did.



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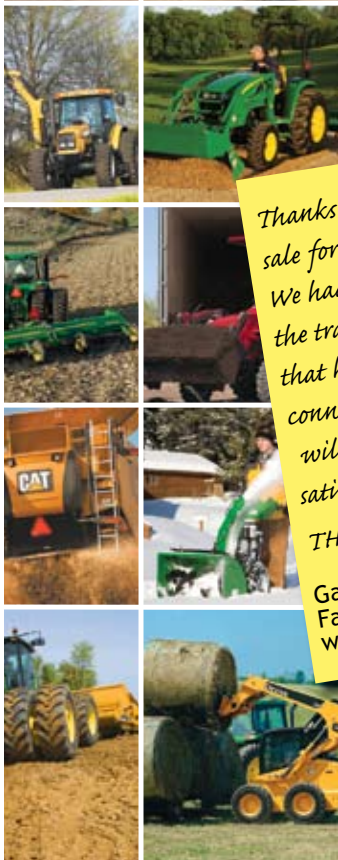
Reporting Dealers for Summer Official Guide

Thanks to these members in SouthWestern Association's trade territory who reported for the IRON Solutions Summer Official Guide. The reporting period for the Summer Official Guide was February 1st through May 1st. Reports earn members discounts on their subscriptions, and ensure that equipment values are fair and accurate.

Ag Power Inc - Hillsboro, KS
Agri Center D/B/A F & W Tractor - Hutchinson, KS
Alamo Ag-Con Equipment Inc - San Antonio, TX
Alamo Ag-Con Equipment, Inc. - Boerne, TX
Alvin Equipment Company Inc - Alvin, TX
American Implement - Scott City - Scott City, KS
American Implement Inc - Garden City, KS
Arnett New Holland Tractor - Arnett, OK
Barbee-Neuhaus Implement Company - Weslaco, TX
Barton County Imp/dba Purinton's - Lockwood, MO
Barton County Implement Company - Lamar, MO
Bartram's Equipment Sales & Svc - Tulia, TX
Bob Lowe Inc - Chickasha, OK
Bowie County Equipment - De Kalb, TX
Brady Implement Company - Brady, TX
Brazos Valley Equipment Co - Waco, TX
Bretz Inc - Dighton, KS
Browns Implement Inc - Floydada, TX
Brown's Power & Equipment Inc - Tulia, TX
Bruna Brothers Inc - Washington, KS
Bruna Implement Co. - Marysville, KS
Bruna Implement Company - Clay Center, KS
BTI - Ness City, KS
BTI Bucklin - Bucklin, KS
BTI Greensburg - Greensburg, KS
BTI Pratt - Pratt, KS
C & H Equipment - Muleshoe, TX
Carrico Implement Co Inc - Lincoln, KS
Carrico Implement Co Inc - Hays, KS
Carrico Implement Company Inc - Beloit, KS
Central New Holland - Oklahoma City, OK
Chickasha Ford New Holland - Chickasha, OK
Colby Ag Center LC - Colby, KS
Colby Implement LLC - Colby, KS
Crown Power & Equipment - Eldon, MO
Crown Power & Equipment - Columbia, MO
Crown Power & Equipment - Jefferson City, MO
Crown Power & Equipment - Salisbury, MO
Crown Power & Equipment - La Monte, MO
Cusack Equipment - Oklahoma City, OK
Dairyland New Holland Tractor Co. - Sulphur Springs, TX
Dauer Implement Company - Salina, KS
Davidson Implement Company - Ada, OK
Dean Machinery Company - Chillicothe, MO
Dean Machinery Company - Sedalia, MO
Dean Machinery Company Inc. - Kansas City, MO
Deems Equipment - Nevada, MO
Deems Equipment - Butler, MO
Deems Farm Equipment of Marshall - Marshall, MO
Deerfield Ag - Garden City, KS
Derr Equipment - Savannah, MO
Dixequip Inc - Houston, TX
Dougherty Implement Company Inc - Colby, KS
Earley Tractor Inc. - Cameron, MO
Enid New Holland - Enid, OK
Ericson Equipment Company - Artesia, NM
Five Star Equipment Inc - Spearman, TX
Foley Equipment Co - Wichita, KS
Foley Equipment Company - Dodge City, KS
Foley Equipment Company - Great Bend, KS
Fritz Implement Inc - Monett, MO
Garden City Farm Equipment Inc - Garden City, KS
Goodland Greenline Inc - Goodland, KS
Goodland Yost Farm Supply - Goodland, KS
Hansford Implement Company - Spearman, TX
Hansford Implement Company - Dumas, TX
Harlingen Implement Co - Brownsville, TX
Harlingen Implement Co - Harlingen, TX
Hartzler Equipment Company - Nevada, MO
Hartzler Equipment Company - Harrisonville, MO
Hendershot Equipment Company - Stephenville, TX
Hendershot Equipment Inc - Decatur, TX
Heuer Sons Implement - Cape Girardeau, MO
Hi-Plains Farm Equipment Inc - Dodge City, KS
Houston County Equipment Co - Crockett, TX
Hoxie Implement Company Inc - Hoxie, KS
Hurst Farm Supply Co Inc. - Lubbock, TX
Hurst Farm Supply Inc - Lorenzo, TX
J & H Farm Equipment Inc - Newton, KS
James Brothers Implement Co - Plainview, TX
John Schmidt & Sons Inc - Mt Hope, KS
Johnson Implement Company - Coleman, TX
Joplin Farm & Lawn - Joplin, MO
Kanequip Inc - Herington, KS
Kanequip Inc - Clay Center, KS
KanEquip Inc. - Garden City, KS
Kanequip, Inc. - Marysville, KS
KanEquip, Inc. - Wamego, KS
Kay Jan, Inc. - Leoti, KS
Kincheloes Inc - Pratt, KS
Kiowa New Holland - Kiowa, KS
Kleiber Tractor & Equipment Inc - La Grange, TX
Landmark Equipment, Inc - Waxahachie, TX
Landmark Equipment, Inc - Fort Worth, TX
Landmark Equipment, Inc. - McKinney, TX
Landmark Equipment, Inc. - Irving, TX
Landmark Equipment, Inc. - Irving, TX
LandMark Implement, Inc. - Smith Center, KS
LandMark Implement, Inc. - Phillipsburg, KS
Lanford Equipment Co Inc - Austin, TX
Lang Diesel Inc. - Ellinwood, KS
Lang Diesel Inc. - Smith Center, KS
Lang Diesel Inc. - Sabetha, KS
Lang Diesel Inc. - Colby, KS
Lang Diesel Inc. - Hays, KS
Lansdowne-Moody Co Inc - Houston, TX
Lauf Equipment Company Inc - Jefferson City, MO
Lawson Implement - Goldthwaite, TX
Lawson Implement Company Inc - Hamilton, TX
Lincoln Farm Supply Inc - Lincoln, KS
Livingston Machinery Co - Fairview, OK
Livingston Machinery Co. - Altus, OK
Livingston Machinery Company - Chickasha, OK
Logan County Implement, LLC - Oakley, KS
Lott Implement Inc - Minneapolis, KS
Martin Farm Power - Chanute, KS
Martin Farm Power - Main - Topeka, KS

Martin Tractor Co. - Chanute, KS
 McConnell Machinery - Ottawa, KS
 McConnell Machinery Company - Lawrence, KS
 McLaughlin Equipment Inc - Cheney, KS
 Modern Farm Equipment Company - Fulton, MO
 New Mexico Machinery - Roswell, NM
 Oakley Ag Center - Oakley, KS
 O'Dell Tractor Co., Inc. - Independence, MO
 Oglesby Equipment Co., Inc. - Hereford, TX
 Olathe Ford Tractor & Equipment Co - Olathe, KS
 Oregon Trail Equipment, Inc - Marysville, KS
 P & K Equipment - Norman, OK
 P & K Equipment - Purcell, OK
 P & K Equipment Inc - Kingfisher, OK
 P & K Equipment Inc. - Enid, OK
 Panhandle Implement Company - Perryton, TX
 Payne County Implement Co - Stillwater, OK
 Porter Henderson Impl. Co. - San Angelo, TX
 Porter Henderson Implement - Big Spring, TX
 Porter Henderson Implement Co I - Ballinger, TX
 Potter Tractor Co. - Columbus, TX
 Quality Implement Co - Frederick, OK
 Quality Implement Co - Abilene, TX
 Quality Implement Co - Stamford, TX
 Quality Implement Co. - Seymour, TX
 Quality Implement Co. - Rotan, TX
 Quality Implement Co. - Burkburnett, TX
 Quality Implement Company - Munday, TX
 Ray Lee Equipment Co Ltd - Dimmitt, TX
 Ray Lee Equipment Co Ltd - Floydada, TX
 Ray Lee Equipment Co. Ltd - Olton, TX
 Ray Lee Equipment Co. Ltd - Plainview, TX
 Ray Lee Equipment Company Ltd - Clovis, NM
 Ray Lee Equipment Company, Ltd. - Muleshoe, TX
 Riggins R-Co. LLC - Marshall, MO
 Robt Yost Ent dba Yost Farm Supply - St Francis, KS
 S & H Farm Supply Inc - Rogersville, MO

S & H Farm Supply Inc - Lockwood, MO
 S & H Farm Supply Inc. - Joplin, MO
 Saginaw Implement Company Inc - Rhome, TX
 Scott Power & Equip - Dalhart, TX
 Scott Power & Equipment Inc - Elkhart, KS
 Scott's Tractor & Equipment - Smithville, MO
 Seiver Implement Company Inc - Donna, TX
 South Plains Implement, Ltd - Deming, NM
 South Plains Implement, Ltd. - Mesquite, NM
 Stanton County Implement, Inc. - Johnson, KS
 Storrer Implement Inc - Iola, KS
 Straub International - Larned, KS
 Straub International - Marion, KS
 Straub International - South Hutchinson, KS
 Straub International - Great Bend, KS
 Straub International - Wichita, KS
 Straub International - Salina, KS
 Summa Implement Company - Maryville, MO
 Sydenstricker Farm & Lawn - Macon, MO
 Sydenstricker Farm & Lawn - Chillicothe, MO
 Terry Implement, Inc. - Gallatin, MO
 Texarkana New Holland - Texarkana, TX
 Thomas Implement, Inc. - Altamont, KS
 Tulsa New Holland Inc - Tulsa, OK
 Vahrenberg Implement Inc - Higginsville, MO
 Washington County Tractor Inc - Brenham, TX
 Watson Tractor & Implement - Farmington, NM
 Watts Tractor Company - Anson, TX
 WB Equipment - Dimmitt, TX
 WB Equipment - Dimmitt, TX
 WCTRATOR - Navasota, TX
 Wells Implement Inc - Maysville, MO
 Wichita Tractor Co. - Wichita, KS
 Winchell's, Inc. - Phillipsburg, KS
 Witzel & Rhea Implement Co., Inc. - Sharon Springs, KS
 Witzel & Rhea Implement Company - Goodland, KS
 Wood Equipment Company - Clovis, NM



Thanks to IRON SEARCH, we completed a sale for equipment to be shipped to BELIZE. We had to wait for a couple of weeks to send the tractor on its way due to the hurricanes that hit their area. We made a good connection with a grower there & hopefully will be able to ship more due to his satisfaction!

THANKS IRON SEARCH!!!!

Gary Pope
 Fairview Sales, Inc., Michigan
 www.fairviewsales.com

DEALERS IN 2007

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Quality Personnel Are Your Keys to Success

By John Walker, President, After Market Service Consulting Co., Inc.

Look For John Walker as a future trainer for the SouthWestern Association On-Line Campus

We will continue to work at getting the message across to equipment dealers that quality personnel are the key to maintaining a strong customer base. Quality personnel with strong work ethics do more to build market share and a customer-for-life culture within the dealership than dealers can imagine.

A few weeks ago I had the opportunity to spend quality time listening to a young, aggressive and successful dealer principal who runs a sizable equipment dealership with numerous branches and a couple hundred employees.

Dealership Identity

This dealer admitted that a year ago he was struggling to develop an identity for his business and to build teamwork between his employees. As we have talked and written about on numerous occasions (such as last month) this is not an uncommon problem with equipment dealers. The common problem is that most dealers fail to recognize the "identity" problem as an issue. We continue to bury the problem without taking action. We fail to recognize that the dealer sets the stage for how employees will conduct themselves. That is certainly not the case with this young, energized dealer.

This dealer is beginning his own program of awareness for not only his managers, but for every employee within the dealership. He knows that overall awareness improves morale, teamwork and even more important, productivity. As we have stated, employees that are aware can talk intelligently with customers. Employees who are aware are more enthusiastic and this enthusiasm shines through when employees are conversing with customers. Whether you recognize it or not, the customer picks up on this enthusiasm and feels far more comfortable about doing business with the dealership.

Outdated Management Style

Years ago the majority of equipment dealers practiced what most of you recall as "mushroom management." Typically employees knew little or nothing about the company they worked for. It was an unspoken commandment, "Employees have no need to know this information, because if they leave us, they will spread our numbers all over town!"

Not surprising, this philosophy was passed down from father to son with little thought as to the effect it would have upon the day-to-day business of the dealership. It worked for my dad, it worked for my granddad, why shouldn't it work for me?

One particular question our dealer asked his employees, which even today many established dealerships consider

"taboo" was: "What amount of money do you think the dealership keeps for every dollar of sales?" For many of our readers this is going beyond the point of being open with employees. You are discussing the bottom-line of the business, and as some of you might say, this is "nobody's damn business!"

Most of you can imagine the reply that you would receive from your employees. Can you further imagine the look on the employees' faces after getting the true answer?

Can you imagine the employee having a better understanding the next time he/she is criticized? As an example: A technician standing around smoking a cigarette, talking to another technician about last week's deer hunting. Following this he climbs into his service van at 8:10 a.m. or even 8:20 a.m. little realizing that he has cheated the dealership out of 10 to 20 minutes of billing time.

Employee Understanding Leads to Dealership Improvements

Do you believe the employee who understands the answer to this question will have a better understanding of his manager's request for better time management, productivity and efficiency? This dealer discovered a great deal of benefit in posing this single question to his employees and he fully recognizes that the dealership's overall improvements are just beginning to surface.

Another dealer's Operations Manager mentions that the best customer is a well-informed and knowledgeable customer. He goes on further to say that unfortunately very few of his customers have acquired this knowledge and he has begun to take the steps necessary to get information to his customers through his employees.

He comments that his dealership has to train employees to be knowledgeable enough to help customers make the right decision. Primarily he works with his personnel to sell the features, advantages and benefits of doing business with his dealership. He wants his personnel to be able to answer all the customer's questions. He wants his personnel to become advisors or consultants to the dealership's customers. Knowledge of the dealership most certainly promotes the adage that "in our dealership everyone is a sales person." "We want our customers to fully understand that our dealership is the customers' "one-stop shopping center" for all their needs and requirements. Not just words but facts! As an example: A customer questions an employee about the dealership's labor rate. Typically an employee may say something like: "I am sorry but I have no control over our labor rate." What if the reply had been: "Well sir, we have the best trained and **Continued on next page**

Quality Personnel Are Your Keys to Success

Continued from page 7

experienced technicians within the country and they have the experience to do the job right the first time and on time. We guarantee our quality of work.”

“If we strive to do these things we will separate ourselves from the rest because we will be better than the competition.” He further states that his personnel are now becoming problem solvers instead of following the rest of the pack. His operation has the talent to solve any problem presented. We need to use each others talents to improve ourselves and to benefit the customers. He also states that “none of us has all the answers to all problems, but together we have a better chance to offer new ideas and concepts to our customers.”

If these employees can truly become advisors to their customers, then these employees can truly become more valuable to the dealership. The customers will appreciate the employees’ confidence and advice and will remember the employee who assisted them in making the right decision. Customers will use this new found knowledge to do a far better job for their company and they will remember who helped them become successful.

Dealership Opportunities

There is a phrase we have been hearing on a growing basis from equipment dealers: “cross-training.” We are a strong believer in cross training. We have a dealer in a large metropolitan area who requests that his equipment sales personnel and customer service sales reps spend one day a week on the road together. This greatly improves the dealership’s networking and customer knowledge. We have also seen more and more dealers who are making the day of delivery enhancing the buying experience for the customer. No longer does the truck driver simply load on and drop off a piece of equipment at the customer’s place of business. It is an event for the customer. It is an opportunity for the dealership to leave a lasting impression with the customer. It is a buying experience the customer will not soon forget.

We applaud situations within dealerships when sales personnel take the time to introduce customers to parts and service managers and the employees within those departments. All this gives the customers the satisfaction that the sales person wants the customer to know and meet those people who will “always” be there for them after the sale. What a method to build team-work between employees. This assists the dealership in breaking down the walls between departments. This allows the customers to know and feel they are dealing with a dealership that cares about the customers’ needs and requirements and that everything works toward the elimination of “*unscheduled down-time*” for their customers.

Developing a Customer-for-Life culture within an equipment dealership can definitely develop increased market share and sales as well as increased profitability for any

equipment dealer. The third goal of course is increased customer satisfaction indexes.

A Word of Caution

A couple of years ago we wrote an article entitled: Dealer don’t be held hostage! There is a definite need to recognize that in almost every dealership we have some “rotten apples,” people who will consistently fight the system the dealership initiated.

Unfortunately, it is these people who bring down the group. One bad apple will bring down the entire department if the individual is not removed. There are too many managers and too many principals who wait too long to take action in this area. There is always the question of how will we find someone to replace this individual or something such as this: “He’s my brother-in-law and I can’t let him go, it will upset my wife.” Unfortunately, the longer we wait the worse the situation becomes. We have seen cases where the “bad apple” runs off not only customers but also your quality personnel.

On a more positive note, we have also experienced situations when the decision is made to let the “bad apple” go and someone steps forward and fills the vacancy in a manner that the dealer could not believe was possible. A dealership focused upon increased growth and profitability, as well as improved customer satisfaction has no place for “bad or rotten apples.” These individuals will always hold you back.

Set your goals and go after growth and prosperity for your business!

Fetters Named President of Federated Insurance Companies

Jeff Fetters has been named President of the Federated Insurance Companies. Federated’s Chairman - CEO Al Annexstad announced Fetters’ appointment as part of a series of leadership changes designed to solidify the future success of the Federated organization.

Fetters, a Ball State University graduate, began his 28-year career with Federated as a Marketing Representative in Valparaiso, Ind. He was quickly promoted to District Marketing Manager and on to Regional Marketing Manager in Nashville, Tenn. and later Indianapolis, Ind. In 1993, Fetters took control of Federated’s Agency Operations, becoming Vice President and Marketing Manager – Agency Operations and later Vice President and Director of Field Operations. In 2001, he was appointed Executive Vice President – Insurance Operations. Fetters’ responsibilities expanded again in 2004 when he became Executive Vice President – Chief Operating Officer.

Member News

Customer Appreciation Day

Cook Tractor in Clinton, Mo. held a customer appreciation day on Monday, June 9 to mark their 50th year in business. The open house featured a barbecue lunch with all the trimmings for their customers and friends. Their monthly equipment auction was also held that day. Congratulations to Cook Tractor for 50 years in business!



Award Winners

Two member/dealers were spotlighted recently in NAEDA's *Equipment Dealer* magazine as award winners from Mahindra:

- Sales Excellence Award - **Bill's Tractor**, Adkins, Tex.
- Rookie of the Year Award - **Straub International**, Great Bend, Kan.

Congratulations to these dealers!

Technician Training Program

SouthWestern Association has partnered with OSU Institute of Technology to establish a technician training program for equipment dealership technicians. Students enrolled in the program are sponsored by equipment dealers in the SouthWestern Association territory.

For more information on the program contact:
Tag Webb, SouthWestern Association Regional Manager - 918-232-2830; **Steve Doede**, OSU Institute of Technology Dept. Chairman - 918-293-5392 or **Jeff Flora**, CEO, SouthWestern Association, 800-762-5616.

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Credit Card Processing Rates

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Post card promotion: A \$35 application fee applies.

Association program: No application fee.

Post card promotion: Monthly statements are \$5.

Association program: Monthly statements are \$2 ... Free when downloaded online.

Post card promotion: A transaction fee of 29 cents is assessed on each transaction. However, the promotion didn't indicate when it's applied – on debit transactions or on all transactions.

Association program: The 29 cents is more than double the cost of transaction fees assessed by the association program.

Other questions we pondered when reviewing the promotion centered on rates for swiped or hand-keyed transactions, and rates for rewards, business and corporate card

transactions. The promotion didn't offer a hint about rates for these transactions but it wasn't designed to.

The promotion was all about the boldly printed 1.33 percent (never mind the small print) and getting people to call. It was an invitation to explore and merchants should do just that – explore. But going in, merchants need to understand that processing volume and merchant classification influence rates. Because merchants are categorized by business type, processing rates vary accordingly.

The bottom line is the offer we reviewed is the kind of “stuff” dealers receive – all businesses receive – when it comes to bankcard processing. We thought you'd like to know.

SouthWestern Association, NAEDA and Elavon invite dealers to take advantage of association discount rates. Even if you are currently using another payment processor, call for a FREE rate comparison. You have nothing to lose but higher fees.

To get started, please call 800-546-1831. To receive special member pricing, please mention promotion code 82093.

Save Money

with credit card solutions that reduce costs



Elavon, the endorsed payment processor of NAEDA, invites NAEDA-affiliated dealers to take advantage of the lowest program rates in years. Even if you're using another payment processor, call us for a **FREE** rate comparison. You have nothing to lose but higher fees.

For information, please call 800/546-1831, or fax your business and contact information to 800/799-3984. Please mention source code 82093.



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Membership Benefits Include:

- ✓ Competitive Rates
- ✓ NO Application Fee
- ✓ NO Annual Fee
- ✓ NO Equipment Reprogramming Fee

New Value-Added Features:

- ✓ Electronic Check Service
- ✓ Gift Card Program

Elavon Offers:

- ✓ Processing of all major credit cards
- ✓ PC, Internet and terminal applications
- ✓ Online reporting
- ✓ 24/7 customer support