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Please send your letters to:

NETSA

P.O. Box 1012

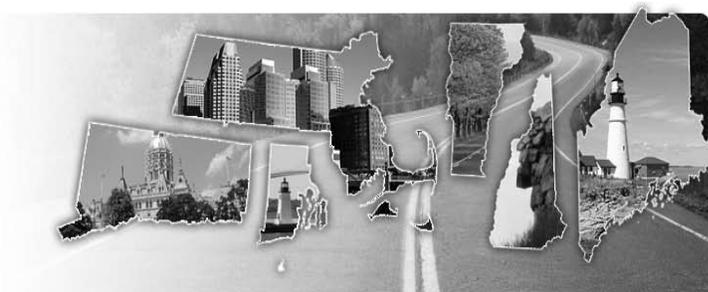
Yarmouth, ME 04096

Phone: 207-846-0986

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Mail Room - We'd love to hear from You!



NETSA Scholarship Golf Tournament Continues to Produce Great Results!

Jim Melvin Jr. - Golf Tournament Committee Chairman

We held the annual 2014 NETSA Scholarship Golf Outing on Friday, September 12th, at Shining Rock Country Club. Once again, mother nature smiled on us with fabulous weather! We had a NETSA record of **92 golfers** that all enjoyed the challenge that Shining Rock offers. On behalf of the NETSA board, I would like to thank all the sponsors, donors of auction items and golfers that helped make this one of our most successful outings ever. This is one of the key contributor events to funding our scholarships.

Congratulations to the **Low Gross** winners, Jim Melvin Sr. & Jr., Matt Ricci & Chris Cameron, **Low Net** winners, Mike Garzone, Steve Sabol, Fred

Continued on pg. 2



Golf Tournament Appreciation: My first step is to thank the generous Golf Tournament sponsors, the competitive attendees and Dick Cole, Jack Kelly, Shawn McKenzie and Jim Melvin Jr. for helping create another outstanding Scholarship fund raiser. Our diverse

golfing groups were treated to beautiful weather along with playing on New England's highest rated public golf course. Our NETSA team's assignment was to insure we could increase our scholarship funds, and everyone did their job to make it happen. I can attest that these funds are greatly needed and appreciated by our scholarship winners and their families.

On another Good News story, the Farmer's Almanac, is suggesting another harsh winter for our area, which could produce another outstanding winter sales period for all. The ice conditions we've seen in the past created as much demand for winter tires as actual snow conditions. Even new car owners and dealers were seeking some relief as all season tires just left them motionless. In addition to extreme ice, many people have careers that require extended or non-traditional hours before roads are treated. I have never seen a customer complain for having too much traction; however, I have had people return with all seasons during the winter because they could not safely travel where they needed to go.

With that thought, how many people will bring their used tires to your store to be installed on their vehicle? During that step, our teams must look for obvious warning signs like aging, broken or ripped beads, substantial sidewall or tread cracking, broken belts, severely cupped or chopped, or worn out below the 2/32 area.

But another issue should be of concern too. Are these tires subject to recall? We have been told that our industry tire recall process is broken. I had the chance to witness that with some recent customer visits.

Two separate transactions, the customers brought in some P235/75R15 Firestone Wilderness tires to have installed. As you old timers remember, these tires were recalled years ago. Very suspicious but these same tires

were featured on an ABC TV special assignment on Tire Aging and recalls. Even though the recall was done in the early 2000's, these tires are still in salvage yards, or acting as spare tires somewhere. The same tires that consumers and investigative reports find effective for their cause. Imagine the nightmare of an ABC, NBC, or CBS camera crew filming your service team in the process of installing tires like these.

Many store employees were not even employed during that period, so how do you keep the news fresh? What's the chance of your service team being asked to install Recalled tires when customers have you install tires they bring in. On the site www.arfc.org/tires/ they have listed 180 recent recalls and some affect a number of sizes.

Some of these recalls were tire manufacturer's voluntary recalls. They usually address their recalls somewhere within their web site. Recalls can be for such simple reasons as the printed materials on the sidewall is incorrect. Others may be response to enough consumer complaints about tires that have been registered. The affected tires might be extremely low, but enough for the manufacturer to agree to a recall. The others, like the Firestone tires and the Chinese tires, started at the NHTSA side and made national news in the process.

It appears that the source for these unsafe tires are from the dump pickers or storage trailer pickers that are unaware or do not care why the tires were discarded. Thanks to the web, these same problem tires can be found on the internet for sale too. Imagine that this is the way some people buy their tires.

So we take the good with the bad, make our knowledge available to our team and our customers, and do what we can to keep our roadways safe. Hope this article helps.

Steve McGrath

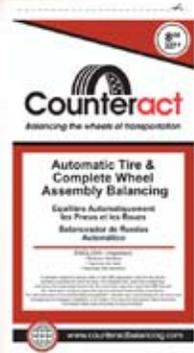
Continued pg 1. NETSA Scholarship Golf Tournament Continues to Produce Great Results!

Fred Gralinski & Dave Paul. **Long drive** winner was Matt Lemieux, **Senior Long Drive** was Gilly Canastra, **Closest to the pin** winners were Ellery Barrett, Paul Stanley, Howie Fetzer & Steve Sabol. The **Longest Putt** was made by Larry Cherrier.

Thanks again to all the attendees, donors & Board members that gave their time to help make another GREAT NETSA event!



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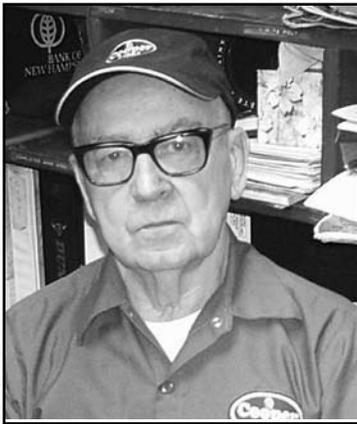
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Our retail sales in Nashua were down around 4% for January and broke even for February. We had one day less of business in February of 1993. We again took President's day off in February, and we questioned several dealers in different areas and came up with

some busy, some slow, and about 1/3 closed. We will check with more dealers next year as the holiday approaches. Our dealer sales in Nashua were down 6% in January and 8% in February. Our business out of town was down about 4 ½% in January and 6% in February. There is no doubt the clubs are nibbling away at us with a Sam's Club opening in Concord, NH, and I believe BJ's and Costco have opened or will open shortly in the seacoast area. The job climate over the country keeps eroding as Boeing plans on dropping 27,000 while GM to lay off 11,000, we are really in trouble as manufacturing had many good paying jobs in the past which appear to be extinct in our lifetime. We see Bridgestone/Firestone putting a lot of pressure on their dealers to buy more brands in their own family. Bridgestone will be introducing a new snow tire for next year which doesn't make much sense as we had a good year this past winter, but that certainly is not the normal. We are not in the dual bead business per se, but the discounting in that market is really crazy. I saw a case where the Goodyear Super Hi Miler was close to Monarch pricing. There is no doubt that anybody buying a monthly quantity of truck tires from a manufacturer is getting special deals and that includes Associate Brands which includes Monarch. We see Dico discounting heavy to the big hitters, and the small direct dealer is being pushed aside. We even see Cooper being wholesaled, and some dealers who thought they had an exclusive will find non-dealers with their product buying. At their costs, Michelin is having real difficulty controlling the sale of their products as Firestone seems to have easy access to both Michelin passenger and truck. We

think Michelin has very serious problems with their own passenger direct accounts. As the Sears Michelin, the K-Mart Michelin, the Club Michelin are stealing sales from direct dealers and have even more effect in eroding their gross. The Michelin program is based on increases in your unit buying which causes an over inventory, and the days of reckoning are now. They will have to change their style to keep their direct dealers happy, and it better be in the next few months if they want to keep a network of direct dealers.

I was summoned for Jury duty in March and have been fortunate in that case I was to be assigned to got settled a few days prior to the start. It is hard to imagine an opinionated individual like myself sitting on a jury and a judge directing me how to view evidence when I have a mind of my own. My policy with American Express on long term care went through, and it's nearly a necessity if you have some assets to protect. The cost for my wife and me is around \$2600 a year based on \$100.00 a day with a 5% increase per year with the cost to stay about the same. Be sure to take another look at your phone bill because they are discounting heavy at the moment. We need all the help we can get in reducing our expenses. General and Continental are going back to separate salesman, and only time will tell what is the best way to go to market.

Roland Lesieur reprint from the March 1993 Roadrunner.

Roland Lesieur.



NEW ENGLAND TIRE & SERVICE ASSOCIATION

The Roadrunner is a publication of New England Tire & Service Association. The Road Runner is published 4 times a year as a source of information for NETSA Members and supporters. NETSA directors, staff and members do not necessarily agree with all the contents or opinions appearing in this publication nor should its readers rely on any of the Road Runner content for support of any legal position. On matters involving legal interpretation, the reader is advised and encouraged to relay solely upon the advice of his or her own hired legal council. The road Runner invites and encourages comments from its readers.



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Do you and your staff really know how to engage and interact with the customers?

Do they even know what it means?

Seems as though every year there's a "new" word in Customer Service. And this year it's been "engagement."

Engage the customer.

What's it mean? Or better yet: What's does it not mean?

The answer to what it's NOT, is -- it's NOT the customer service experience. Don't confuse the two. They are quite different.

It is: Just as you might imagine... when you might have popped "the question," (or said "yes" if you were the one being asked), you normally went into what is called an 'engagement' period.



That's the time before the marriage. Time to better know and understand someone you're supposed to spend a lifetime with. Sometimes it's short and sometimes it's a longer period of time. But usually there's an 'engagement' period.

And so it is with our customers. Before they can "BUY," before they can become our customer (before we 'marry' them), we need to get 'engaged.' Make sense? Or starting to?

Right, you don't just walk up to someone and say, "Hello" and then head for the altar. It's the same idea in the sales and customer service world. There's an old sales saying: "The customer has to buy YOU first, before they buy the product." And it's true.

You need to spend a bit of time 'engaging the customer' before they buy or use your services. The Engagement is the time to wine and dine the customer; not physically – but mentally, and emotionally. Yes, to be on your best behavior. And you usually are. But as in marriage, it need not, and should not, must not, stop there.

I've never considered divorce (murder yes, not

divorce.) However, those who have been through divorce coincidentally all shared a similar story to me. "They changed" I've been told. "They were so nice during the engagement period, but afterwards, it all changed."

I have always wondered why. Why be one way to get the customer and then another way after you get them? No wonder customers get upset. And when you think of it, in an engagement, you are each others 'customers.'

So to make it a bit easier for you to learn how to Engage a customer, below are a few (and only a few) ideas to 'get engaged' with your customer. There are many more. To ENGAGE the customer one simply needs to follow these engagement guidelines:

- When a call comes in or a customer walks into your location, let them know they called or came into the right place! This is not brain surgery; just use those exact words.
- Names are critical, of course. To gain a customer's name, you need to introduce yourself first; then ask theirs.
- Smiling is a condition of employment and grounds for termination. Can't make that strong enough! Not smiling is not an option.
- We need to remember, the customer is NOT always right; they always THINK they are right. Deal with the situation that way and it's much easier to handle.
- Don't argue with the customer. You'll lose every single time. You will never win.
- Watch out for Killer Words. These are words that will stop a conversation. Or even kill the conversation. A few killer words to beware of, from our surveys are: "No problem," "It's not our policy," "You don't seem to understand." We have plenty more of them to be sure. These happened to have gone right to the top.
- Be a double checker. No one likes to hear, "I don't know" or "We don't have that." Learn how to create the Telephone Doctor language of "positive statements at the top of the conversation." Once you do, the engagement period can start to move along.
- Please, thank you and you're welcome will never go out of style. EVER.

It's still not time to put the ring on the customers finger, but you'll be headed in the right direction with these steps or "Rules of Engagement".

I've been doing this a long time. It all works. More later.

Nancy Friedman can be reached at (314) 291-1012 or email to: nancy@telephonedoctor.com



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Winner's Low Gross - Team 1

Winner's Low NET - Team 11



Winner Longest Drive
Matt Lemieux

Winner Longest Drive 60+
Gilly Canastra





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- Reduce Inventory Costs*
- Automated Reporting*
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Reduced Consumption & Costs

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2014 NETSA Scholarship Golf Tourney

Shining Rock Golf Club, Northbridge, MA

The Road Runner
Fall 2014



TEAM 1



TEAM 2



TEAM 3



TEAM 4



10 TEAM 5



TEAM 6

2014 NETSA Scholarship Golf Tourney

Shining Rock Golf Club, Northbridge, MA

The Road Runner
Fall 2014



TEAM 7



TEAM 8



TEAM 9



TEAM 10



TEAM 11



TEAM 12

2014 NETSA Scholarship Golf Tourney

Shining Rock Golf Club, Northbridge, MA

The Road Runner
Fall 2014



TEAM 13



TEAM 14



TEAM 15



TEAM 16



12 TEAM 17



TEAM 18

2014 NETSA Scholarship Golf Tourney

Shining Rock Golf Club, Northbridge, MA

The Road Runner
Fall 2014



TEAM 19



TEAM 20



TEAM 21



TEAM 22



TEAM 23



TIME TO EAT!

2014 NETSA Scholarship Golf Tourney - ROSTER

Shining Rock Golf Club, Northbridge, MA

The Road Runner
Fall 2014

Team	Name	Company	Team	Name	Company		Name	Company
1	Jim Melvin Jr	Melvin's Tire Pros	10	Chris Richards	Max Finkelstein	19	Jeff Mastroianni	ATD
	Jim Melvin Sr			Ellery Barrett	VIP		Lee Davis	ATD
	Chris Cameron			Rick Robertson	VIP		Rich Debenitto	Joe's Tire
	Matt Ricci			Norm LaCoste	VIP		Mike Leone	Tire Store
2	Dave Ventura	Mohawk Rubber Sales	11	Fred Gralinski	Bridgestone	20	John Kachapis	Advance Auto Parts Carquest
	Pete Georgantas			Steve Sabol			Jim Ragone	
	Walter Bunsce			Dave Paul			Scott Collins	
	Brian Bufis			Mike Garzone	Tom Lyons	Chris Jenkins		
3	Tom Ferguson	Safehold Special Risk	12	Nate Vaillancourt	Hennessy Industries	21	Jason Weintraub	Myers Tire Supply
	Russell Barrett	Toce Brothers		Bill Baxter			Dan Hicks	
	Carmen Lesieur	Maynard & Lesieur		Skip Glass			Tim Leavitt	
	Steve Lesieur	Maynard & Lesieur		Peter Laprad			Paul Stanley	
4	John Pardi	Cooper Tire	13	Darryl Holdsworth	Motostar	22	Al Rivera	Wholesale Exhaust
	Michael Bourgault	Cooper Tire/Roland's		Matt Lemieux			Jimmy Rivera	
	Gill Canastra	Cooper Tire/Roland's		Craig Marran			Mark Gibbs	
	Tony Perone	Cooper Tire/Tire Depot		Bob Hazard			Jack Sousa	
5	Steve Swinimer	Sullivan Tire	14	Dale Franklin	Partner Tire	23	Tony Koles	Montvale Tire
	Gordon Anctil			Mike Baker			Bob Katz	Nu-Tread Tire
	Ryan Murphy			Larry Cherrier			Dick Belcher	Nu-Tread Tire
	Brad Curran			Mike Dalley			Steve Palmisano	Nu-Tread Tire
6	John Waterhouse	TCI	15	Sean Lacey	ATD			
	Gene Quattrucci			Steve Small	ATD			
	Michael Moore			Norm Boucher	ATD/Granite State			
	Carlos Alfai			Henry Gauthier	ATD/Henry's Tire			
7	Bruce Jergensen	Nokian Tyres - CT	16	Kevin Griffin	Griffin Financial Planning			
	Dennis Kelly	Nokian - Kelly Tire		Steve Shaw	ATD			
	Howie Fetzer	Nokian - Fetzer Tire		Tom Tatro	ATD			
	Barry Steinberg	Nokian - Direct Tire		Steve Champagne	ATD			
8	Rory Geraci	Reliable Tire Co	17	Steve Chaput	ATD			
	George Shaw	Reliable Tire Co		Bob Vacca	ATD			
	Wayne Crowell	WECnology		John Reid	ATD			
	Scott Blackburn	WECnology		Gary Kraft	ATD/Kraft Tire			
9	Matt Lewis	Max Finkelstein	18	Greg Saks	ATD/Dorchester Tire			
	Brian Finkelstein	Max Finkelstein		Kevin Conley	ATD/Long Distance Tire			
	Kirk Feinswog	Pirelli		Dwayne Dubey	ATD			
14	Lou Patrick	DeSantie Tire		Darren Daley	ATD			

2014 NETSA Scholarship Golf Tourney - Sponsor's

Shining Rock Golf Club, Northbridge, MA

The Road Runner
Fall 2014

1st Hole	Melvin's Tire Pros	Closest to Pin - 5th	Hunter Engineering
2nd Hole	Hogan Tire Centers	Closest to Pin- 12th	Max Finkelstein
3rd Hole	Tom Lyons Tire	Closest to Pin - 8th	BP Lubricants/Castrol
4th Hole	ATD	Closest to Pin - 15th	Advance Auto Parts/Carquest
5th Hole	Myers Tire Supply	Longest Putt - 1st	Pirelli Tire NA
6th Hole	Falken Tire	Longest Drive - 9th	Max Finfelstein
7th Hole	Safehold Special Risk	Longest Drive 60+16th	Pirelli Tire NA
8th Hole	Town Fair Tire		
9th Hole	Mohawk Rubber Sales	Low Gross Winners	Nokian Tyre - CT
10th Hole	Carroll Tire		
11th Hole	Lappen's Garage Equipment	Low Net Winners	Nokian Tyre
12th Hole	Stellar Industries	Low Net Winners	Bridgestone
13th Hole	ASA Automotive Systems		
14th Hole	Maynard & Lesieur	Lunch/Snack	Max Finkelstein
15th Hole	K&W Tire	Dinner	Max Finkelstein
16th Hole	Reliable Tire Co	Registration Desk	Max Finkelstein & Carroll Tire
17th Hole	TCI Tire Centers	Beverage Cart	Hamel's Tire Center
18th Hole	Cooper Tire	Raffle Certificate	ATD

2014 NETSA Scholarship Golf Tourney - Winner's

Shining Rock Golf Club, Northbridge, MA

Donor	Prize (Total \$1,050)	Winner	Contest	Result
NETSA	\$100 Gift Certificate	Jim Melvin Jr -Melvin's Tire Pros	Team Low Gross	
NETSA	\$100 Gift Certificate	Jim Melvin Sr-Melvin's Tire Pros	Team Low Gross	
NETSA	\$100 Gift Certificate	Chris Cameron- Melvin's Tire P	Team Low Gross	
NETSA	\$100 Gift Certificate	Matt Ricci - Melvin's Tire Pros	Team Low Gross	
NETSA	\$75 Gift Certificate	Fred Galinski - Bridgestone	Team Low Net	
NETSA	\$75 Gift Certificate	Steve Sabol - Bridgestone	Team Low Net	
NETSA	\$75 Gift Certificate	Dave Paul - Bridgestone	Team Low Net	
NETSA	\$75 Gift Certificate	Mike Garzone - Tom Lyons	Team Low Net	
NETSA	\$50 Gift Certificate	Matt Lemieux - Motostar	Longest Drive #9	
NETSA	\$50 Gift Certificate	Gil Canastra - Roland's Tire	Longest Drive #16	60 yrs +
NETSA	\$50 Gift Certificate	Ellery Barrett - VIP	Closest to Pin #5	6'
NETSA	\$50 Gift Certificate	Paul Stanley-Myers Tire Supply	Closest to Pin #8	8'1"
NETSA	\$50 Gift Certificate	Howie Fetzer - Fetzer Tire	Closest to Pin #12	22'8"
NETSA	\$50 Gift Certificate	Steve Sabol - Bridgestone	Closest to Pin #15	9'5"
NETSA	\$50 Gift Certificate	Larry Cherrier - Partner Tire	Longest Putt #1	18'3"



Congratulations!

(Pictured clockwise)

- Paul Stanley-Myers Tire Supply - Closest to Pin #8**
- Howie Fetzer - Fetzer Tire - Closest to Pin #12**
- Steve Sabol - Bridgestone - Closest to Pin #15**
- Larry Cherrier - Partner Tire - Longest Putt #1**
(with NETSA President - Steve McGrath)





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2014 NETSA Scholarship Golf Tourney

Giveaways, Auction & Raffle

The Road Runner
Fall 2014

Donor	Giveaway	Each Player
Carroll Tire	50 - Dozen Golf Balls	6 Balls to each player
Donor	Auction	Winning Bidder
Maynard & Lesieur	2-Boston Red Sox Tickets - 9/24	Tom Ferguson
Sullivan Tire	Justin Pedroia Autographed Boston Red Sox Bat	Gilly Canasta
Tony Koles	Ping Golf Bag	Jim Melvin Sr
Nu-Tread Tire	Celtics Greats Framed Picture	Barry Steinberg
Mohawk Rubber	4 - Boston Bruins Tickets	Norman Boucher
Cooper Tire	4 - Boston Bruins Tickets	Carmen Lesieur



Donor	Raffle
Shining Rock G.C..	Round of Golf for 4 People (\$260)
ATD	\$125 Dick's Sportg Gift Certificate
Yokohama	3 Doz Golf Balls
Yokohama	Towels & Travel Bag
Yokohama	12 Shirts
M&L	2 \$25 Sunoco Gift Cards
Dorchester Tire	Wine Gift Package with 3 Bottles
Nokian Tyre	21 Grab Bags
Nokian Tyre	2 Shirts
Carroll Tire	3 Doz Golf Balls
Hankook	24 Hats
Hankook	Umbrella & Jumper Cables
Tom Lyons Tire	5 shirts & 1 Doz Golf Balls

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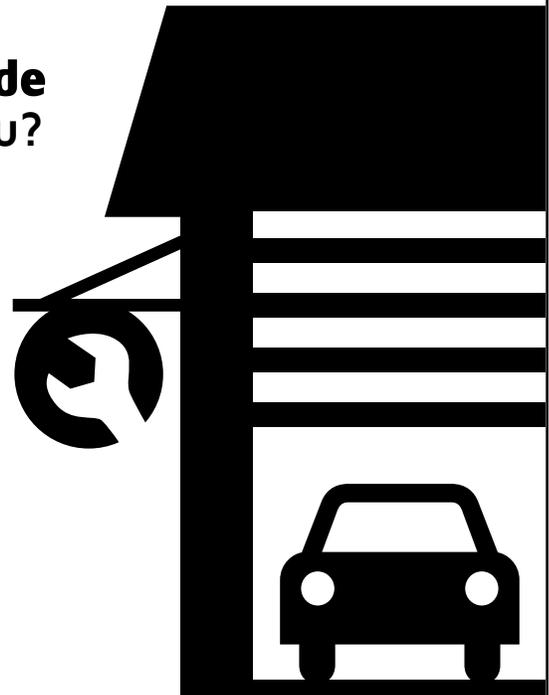


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Greetings from the Boston Myers Tire Supply Family from Left to Right (Alan Ward -Boston Territory 13yrs, Vincent Shipalowski- Southern Mass, Rhode Island Territory 11Yrs. Sue Ippolito-NH, VT Territory 2yrs. Tim Leavitt-Maine Territory 13Yrs. Jason Weintraub- District Manager, Jay Castelot - Northern & Western Ct. Territory 38Yrs. Tom Leninger- Long Island, NY 42Yrs. Ben Barsom- Western Mass, Southern CT and Southern VT 25Yrs) Not pictured is Dan Hicks-Customer Service 26Yrs, Gerry Ebbs- Customer Service 14Yrs)

As a Team we wanted to send a Thank you message out to not only our customers but to the New England Tire Association. First to our customers, thank you so much for 2014. We don't get a chance to say thank you enough for trusting us with your Tire Supplies business. This has been a very successful year for us and it would not have been possible without you. The way we define success is how well we take care of our customers' needs and wants. Also, how we have tried to become a valuable business partner with our long time customers and our new customers this year. Our number 1 priority is the customer, as Ray Kroc said it best "if you work for money, you will never make it, but if you love what you're doing and always put the customer first success will be yours" Last, We would like to thank Dick and the New England Tire Dealers Association for what you do for our business in this region. We have enjoyed our partnership this year and will continue to be a big supporter of the Association. Without your hard work, none of the conventions, outings, advertising, and scholarships would be possible so for that the Myers Team says thank you and we look forward to 2015.



We are very happy to announce the winners of the NETSA Scholarships. Due to the success of the NETSA Scholarship Golf Tournament and generosity of the members at the annual Hall of Fame Dinner, we were able to match each of the sixteen \$1000 sponsored

scholarships.

Please join us in congratulating this year's deserving recipients. The winner of the Sullivan Tire Family of Employees Award sponsored by Sullivan Tire is Megan McGrath of Tire Warehouse attending Champlain College. The Mohawk Rubber Sales of NE Award goes to Allison Zaccheo (Sullivan Tire) attending Stetson University. The Robert J. Sullivan Award sponsored by Safehold Special Risk was presented to Jonathan Wibberley from Sam Wibberley Tire who is now attending Eastern Connecticut State. Sasha Bodnaruk (Northeast Wholesale Tire) is this year's winner of the Manual Dobrusin Scholarship also sponsored by Safehold Special Risk and is attending Northeastern. Maynard & Lesieur awards its Leo H. Lesieur Award to Emily Looby (Kelly's Tire) studying at Nichols College.

Donations collected at the Sullivan Tire trade show booth at the annual trade show and conference this spring have funded the Tim Haley Award awarded to Brady Foshay of Summit of New England and attending Dickinson College. Isabell Wolsky (Continental Tire) attending the University of West Florida won the Melvin's Tire Pros award. Pete's Tire Barns graciously sponsored two scholarships that have been bestowed upon Erin Kelly (Kelly's Tire) attending Yale and Joel Katz (Nu-Tread Tire) attending Northeastern.

Roger Williams University attendees Mathew Tavares (Falmouth Car Care) and Eric Proulx (C&R Tire) captured the Tom Lyons Tire and the Nokian Tyre sponsored awards respectively. Two recipients will be attending Bentley University. Julia Kenney (Vermont Tire) and Lillian Furrier (Hogan Tire) were presented with the Max Finkelstein Award and the Myers Tire Supply Award.

Town Fair Tire presented its scholarship to A-Tech Automotive's Tyler Bradway attending Fitchburg State University. Kayla Campano (Town Fair Tire) received the Terry's Tire Town Scholarship. She is attending the University of New Haven. Kylie Vaughn-Kuehl from Maple Tire Center is attending Kean University in New Jersey is the winner of the American Tire Distributors Award.

Due to limited space in our Road Runner, we have decided to place the Bio of 6 of the 16 winners in this issue of the Road Runner. We'll have the Bio's of the other 10 scholarship winners in the Winter edition of the Road Runner.

All of these deserving students are working hard and have accomplished much. They continue, with your support, to enrich our society with the values and contributions that reflect so favorably on our industry and our members. Thank you to Mohawk Rubber Sales of NE, Maynard & Lesieur, Sullivan Tire, Safehold Special Risk, Inc., Melvin's Tire Pros, Pete's Tire Barn, Tom Lyons Tire, Nokian Tyres, Town Fair Tire, Terry's Tire Town, American Tire Distributors, Max Finkelstein, Inc., and Myers Tire Supply for their generosity and continued support of NETSA and its membership. They enable us to present more aid to member students than any other regional association in the industry. Congratulation to all!



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Picture (Dick Cole - NETSA Exec. Dir., Emily Katz - Sister, Mark Katz - Brother, Joel Katz, Earl Richmond - Pete's Tire Barns, Bob Katz - Father)

Joel A. Katz - winner of the \$2,000 Pete's Tire Barn 2014 Scholarship Award (funded by Pete's Tire Barns and the NETSA Scholarship Golf Tournament) is from Marblehead, Massachusetts where he attended Marblehead High School graduating in 2012 with a 3.6 GPA and scored a perfect 800 on the Mathematics portion of his SAT. He lettered three years on the Varsity Football Team as an Offensive Guard and Defensive Linebacker, awarded the "Unsung Hero Award" as a Junior, the "Esso Haines Award" his Senior year, chosen by his teammates as one of three captains also his Senior year, was named to the All-Conference Team of both the Salem News and the Lynn Item, and was a Boston Globe and Boston Herald All-Star. He was also a three year member of the Winter Indoor and Spring Outdoor Track Teams, the Varsity Wrestling Team his Freshman year, and became the Sports Editor for his school newspaper his Senior year. He was a three year Class President, was a Co-President of the Student Government his Senior year, and was the Host of the Senior Class Talent Show.

His High School Guidance Counselor, Allan Gauthier, says "He is honest, respectful and conscientious. He is an integral part of this high school community and his presence has a significant and positive impact."

Joel has been very active working and volunteering these past years while attending high school. He's worked for Nu-Tread Tire cleaning the shop, changing tires, performing oil changes on vehicles, and learning to do general mechanical services. He also worked his Junior year as an Instructor at For Kids Only, an afterschool program in Peabody, that helps educate, guide and mentor under privileged children. He has been an energetic two year volunteer with the Big Brother "Bridging Lives" program where he spent every Sunday with his "little brothers" as their mentor and positive role model finding this to be extremely rewarding.

Joel is attending Northeastern University in Boston, MA as a Junior majoring in Business Administration and has earned a 3.15 GPA. He's been a member of the Northeastern University Entrepreneurs Club and the Northeastern University Marketing Association which both meet weekly. He's worked as a Lab Attendant in the Mathematics Department and will be working for Techtronic Industries in the Northeastern University Cooperative Program this Fall as a Field Sales Rep. Joel's goal is to earn his Bachelor's Degree and then Master's in Business or Law.

His father, Bob Katz, owns NETSA member, Nu-Tread Tire and Auto Service in East Boston, MA. Congratulations Joel.



Picture (Tom Lake - Pete's Tire Barn, Erin Kelly, Kathie Kelly - Mother, Dennis Kelly - Father, Dick Cole - NETSA Exec. Dir.)

Erin E Kelly - winner of the \$2,000 Pete's Tire Barns 2014 Scholarship Award (funded by Pete's Tire Barns and the NETSA Scholarship Golf Tournament) is from Woodstock, Connecticut where she attended Woodstock Academy graduating in 2011 at the top of her class of 288 students. She was a member of the National Honor Society, the Spanish National Honor Society, the girls Golf Team, and received the 2010 Bausch and Lomb Science Award, the 2010 Harvard Book Award, the 2010 President's Education Award, and the 2011 AP Scholar with Distinction Award. She is currently attending Yale University in New Haven, CT as a Senior majoring in both Psychology and Italian and is an active member of TAPS, a dance group.

Erin has been active working and volunteering these past years while attending school. She's worked at Kelly's Tire for five years pumping gas, checking air pressure and oil, answering the telephone, scheduling appointments, and filing and billing tasks. She worked at Old Sturbridge Village summers in 2009 & 2010 as an 1830's costumed worker cooking over an open fire, dyeing wool, giving school lessons, and playing 1830's games. Kim Adams, Old Sturbridge Village Coordinator of Volunteers, Interns, and Visitor Services, says Erin's "desire for knowledge, her cheerfulness with any assignment given her, her thoroughness at completing all assignments, and her wonderful way of interacting with visitors have impressed all staff who have worked with her." At Yale she is working in the Sterling Memorial Library and is responsible for discharging returned books to their proper location. She worked in the Social Cognitive Lab, which studied how children develop ideas of ownership and come to understand the ideas of others. She also worked in the Motivated Cognition and Aging Brain Lab. Erin was also a volunteer for the Roseland Cottage (local historical landmark) with their Craft Fair and cleanup activities, Creating for a Cause which knits items for local charities, Woodstock Agricultural Society caring for flowers, is on the Missions Committee at her Church, and tutored students in Spanish. At Yale, she volunteers for New Haven Reads where she tutors children in reading and writing and is a tax preparer for the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program .

Erin has completed 6 semesters at Yale earning a 3.78 GPA. She plans on continuing to double major in Psychology and Italian, with a concentration in neuroscience, and "after college, I would like to take the GRE, apply to graduate schools, be accepted into a PhD program in clinical psychology, and eventually become a psychologist."

Her father, Dennis Kelly, is a co-owner of NETSA member, Kelly's Tire in Putnam, CT. Congratulations Erin.



Picture (Dick Cole - NETSA Exec. Dir. Robert Bodnaruk - Father, Sasha, Tom Ferguson - Safehold Special Risk and NETSA Board Member)

A. Bodnaruk - winner of the \$2,000 Manual Dobrusin 2014 Scholarship Award (funded by Safehold Special Risk and the NETSA Scholarship Golf Tournament) is from Wakefield, Massachusetts where she attended Wakefield Memorial High School graduating in 2010. She was a member of the Movement Dance Studio Team, JV Indoor Track Team, and was the Captain of the Varsity Lacrosse Team her Senior Year. She received an Honorable Mention in the 2008 Boston Globe Art Show for Graphic Design, the Clark University Book Award in 2009, and was elected to the National Honor Society her Senior Year.

Sasha has been active working and volunteering these past years while attending school. She worked at the Camp Fire Boys and Girls Club in Salem as a Senior Councilor from 2006 - 2010, a bank teller at the First Educational Savings Branch in 2009-2010, and is currently working at the Hallmark Health System - Lawrence Memorial Hospital as a Microbiology Lab Technician. Sasha was a volunteer for the Social Awareness Club, the Rachel's Challenge New Student Program, the American Heart Association Walk, the Relay for Life, and over 200 hours for the Camp Fire Boys and Girls Club.

Sasha is attending Northeastern University in Boston, MA as a Senior majoring in Biology. She has earned a 3.77 GPA in her first three years and has been a member of the Biology Club and Marine Biology Club. Her goal is to become a Physician Assistant and says "This Spring, I took an endocrinology course and a large part of the course was diagnosing patients through case studies. I get truly excited and enthralled learning a patient's history, diagnosing their systems, and identifying the best course of treatment. She completed her first co-op at Tufts Craniofacial Pain, Headache, and Sleep Center her Sophomore year and her second co-op at Tufts Sackler School of Biomedical Sciences, doing research in a genetics lab this past year. Schuchi Dhadwal, D.D.S. at Tufts says "She is always to the point in her communications, is well organized, structured and clear in her thinking, and is able to translate her clear thinking into clear communication too (verbal and written)."

Her father, Robert Bodnaruk, is the co-owner of NETSA member, Northeast Wholesale Tire in Malden, MA. Congratulations Sasha.



Picture (Lynn Looby - Mother, Emily, Todd Looby - Father, Larry Lesieur - Maynard & Lesieur and NETSA Board Member, Dennis Kelly - Kelly's Tire, Dick Cole - NETSA Exec. Dir.)

Emily K. Looby - winner of the \$2,000 Leo H. Lesieur 2014 Scholarship Award (funded by Maynard & Lesieur and the NETSA Scholarship Golf Tournament) is from Woodstock, Connecticut where she attended Woodstock Academy graduating in 2011. She was a member and Secretary of the Spanish National Honor Society and received the Early Child Development Award. She is currently attending Nichols College in Dudley, Massachusetts as a Senior majoring in English Education.

Emily has been active working and volunteering these past years while attending school. She's worked at Kelly's Tire for four years pumping gas, checking oil, and checking tire air pressure. She says "I really enjoy this job and have had a lot of fun talking with the customers and getting to know new people." The summer of 2012, she worked for the Girl Scouts of Connecticut as an Assistant Program Counselor where she helped girls ages six to fourteen on anti-bullying activities and building self-esteem. At Nichols College, she is working as a Teacher's Assistant in the Honors Analytical Writing class for Freshman, and is a Peer Tutor at the Nichols College Academic Resource Center helping students on writing assignments. She has been a volunteer Spanish tutor, a volunteer dance assistant teacher for toddlers, and a volunteer at Old Sturbridge Village as a tour guide and day camp counselor.

Emily has completed six semesters at Nichols College earning a 3.91 GPA and High Honors on the Dean's List. She plans on becoming a high school English teacher where she hopes to share "the gift of literature with my students." Marissa Loon, Nichols College Director Academic Resource Center says "Emily possesses a natural gift for working with students....she has proven herself to be an extremely motivated tutor and student, as well as a mature and eager young woman." Congratulations Emily



Picture (Dick Cole - NETSA Exec. Dir., Stacey Tavares - Mother, Mathew, Wayne Tavares - Father, Steve Garzone - Tom Lyons Tire)

Mathew R. Tavares - winner of the \$2,000 Tom Lyons Tire 2014 Scholarship Award (funded by Tom Lyons Tire and the NETSA Scholarship Golf Tournament) is from Falmouth, Massachusetts where he attended Falmouth High School graduating in 2012. He participated as a member of the Varsity Football Team all four years as a Center and Linebacker, earning a Varsity letter his Junior & Senior years, the 2011 Tim Fuller Outstanding Lineman Award, and was a 2011 Atlantic Coast League All Star. He was also a member of the Spring Track Team earning a Varsity letter his Sophomore, Junior & Senior years, a three year member of the Basketball Team, and a Winter Track Team member his Senior year. He excels in graphics and digital photography where he won a Cape Cod Times award for graphics in advertising and had one of his photographs published in the local paper. He showed a steady progression in his academic studies over the four years, was on the Honor Roll his Junior and Senior years, and was elected to the National Art Honor Society his Senior year.

Mathew has been active working and volunteering these past years while attending school. He worked his Freshman summer for the Town of Falmouth's Beach Department as a parking attendant, cleaning the parking lot, and collecting parking fees from visitors. His Sophomore Summer he's been working at the restaurant - British Beer Company in Falmouth, MA. During the school year, he's been working in the Office of Student Programs and Leadership as a Graphic Designer. He volunteers for the Falmouth Service Center as a landscaper, the last four years for the Falmouth Road Race, and many other community events with the National Art Honor Society.

Mathew is attending Roger Williams University in Bristol, RI as a Junior majoring in Mechanical Engineering and has earned a 2.86 GPA. His goal is to obtain his Bachelor's Degree and then Master's in Mechanical Engineering. His High School Social Studies Teacher, who also was his Track and Football Coach says "Matt is an outstanding citizen and a true gentleman. Highly respected by both his peers and the faculty here at Falmouth High School he has left an indelible mark here at FHS as a model student-athlete. He is the type of young man you would want your daughter to bring home."

His father, Wayne Tavares, works for NETSA member, Falmouth Car Care Center as an Auto Tech in their Falmouth, MA. store. Congratulations Matt.



Picture (Dick Cole - NETSA Exec. Dir., Sid Tinson - Sullivan Tire, Megan, Cindy McGrath - Mother, Steve McGrath - Father)

Megan K. McGrath - winner of the \$2,000 Sullivan Tire Family of Employees 2014 Scholarship Award (funded by Sullivan Tire and the NETSA Scholarship Golf Tournament) is from Keene, New Hampshire where she attended Keene High School graduating in 2012. She was a member of the Girl's Cross-Country team all four years and was inducted into the National Honor Society her senior year for maintaining above a 3.5 average GPA.

Megan has been active working and volunteering these past years while attending school. She worked at Humdingers Mini Golf and Ice Cream for three Summers serving ice cream, cooking, being a cashier, and helping maintain the golf course. She also worked as a Nanny past Summers, and has been babysitting for numerous families during the H.S. school year. Megan was very energetic as a volunteer for the Community Kitchen Thanksgiving meals, local nursing home in Keene, Keene Day Care Center, and many volunteer activities for the United Church of Christ during February vacations in: Puerto Rico (working with farmers and businesses), Los Angeles (homeless, poverty, drugs & gangs education), Richmond (daycare and afterschool program for low-income kids), and Washington D.C. (hunger awareness, soup kitchens and distribute food). She was also the youth Deacon at her Church her Senior year.

Megan is attending Champlain College in Burlington, Vermont as a Junior majoring in Elementary Education. She has earned a 3.93 GPA and on the Dean's List her first two years. She has been working at Edmunds Elementary School (Burlington) in the Kids After School Program since 2013. She explains "I decided I wanted to major in elementary education after working at a preschool on one of my church's mission trips." She also has worked in 3 Intern programs at the Cheshire Children's Museum in Keene since May 2013, the Allen Brook Elementary School in Williston, and the Trinity Children's Center at the Trinity Campus in Burlington

She wants to gain experience and graduate from Champlain College, then get a job in the education field and work with children somewhere in New England. Her Keene High School Science teacher, Marshall Davenson, says "Megan McGrath is a stand out.....Megan has an amazing work ethic.....She makes it look easy, never appearing stressed, never complaining".

Her father, Steve McGrath, is the manager of, NETSA member, Tire Warehouse in Keene, NH. Congratulations Megan.



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When was the last time you counted your stars? I'm not talking about the remote bodies of light in the night sky or your favorite actors on the big screen. I'm talking about your reputation. Do you know how customers perceive your business and products? The number of stars, thumbs ups, and written reviews you receive can serve as an asset. To be successful, it's important for you to understand the value of reviews and how to manage your online reputation.

We live in a world where customers can turn potential buyers into in-store sales based on positive or negative reviews. Over 70% of consumers seeking tires or auto services start the purchasing process online where they can read reviews written by shopping peers.

The bottom line: Consumers trust reviews to make purchase decisions.

Knowing How and When to Obtain Online Reviews

As a business owner, it makes sense to look at reviews as both a marketing tool and a business improvement opportunity. But utilizing reviews first requires you to have them. What can you do to get customers to engage positively with you online?

From a marketing perspective, successfully working with reviews takes a bit of effort both offline and online. Before they depart from your shop, try asking satisfied customers to post a review for your business online. Another way to obtain reviews is by offering incentives. For example, you can give customers a receipt that asks them to complete an online review (or survey) in return for the chance to win something. Discounts granted in exchange for reviews are also a popular method for enticing customers to review your business.

What about "beating the system" and posting fake reviews? No one needs to know you're pulling the strings, right? Hold it! The Internet is full of careful consumers and tech savvy individuals who can discover the truth. You don't want to deal with the damage your reputation will receive when you're caught misusing review websites. In addition to resulting in bans from review websites, legal actions can be taken against your business. Instead of posting fake reviews, simply do good by your customers and encourage them to do good by you.

Choosing the Right Review Channels and Handling Reviews

No matter how you encourage customers to leave

reviews, make sure you narrow your focus on where you want your reviews posted. You can lead customers to your website, your Google+ page, or your Yelp! page among others. For the best reach of reviews, I recommend using Google+ or Yelp!

Once you claim your free business listing on Google+ or Yelp!, you can identify yourself as the owner and respond to reviews. This is a great way to engage with your customers. No business is perfect, so responding to less than perfect reviews displays a genuine passion for customer satisfaction on your part while also providing you with the opportunity to turn that unhappy customer into a satisfied one who will return to you in the future.

When responding to reviews, keep the tone of your response professional and positive. Keep your responses concise and to the point of resolving the customer's issue. Be sure to thank the reviewer for his or her business and feedback. Remember, all of your responses are displayed publicly for all to read. After resolving an issue, gently ask the customer if they would update/edit their original review to reflect the new experience.

Both Google+ and Yelp! offer many more tips on how to respond to reviews. Review their guidelines before you respond and start engaging your customers online through reviews.

For any questions - call Net Driven at (877) 860-2005

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15 years ago we bought a tire shop. We've lived through Y2K, the Firestone recall, car dealers selling tires, nitrogen, Chinese tires, TPMS, GM recalls and Obamacare.

A lot can happen in a year, let alone 15 and if there was a piece of advice I could have given myself 15 years ago, it's to "Be Prepared". I'm no Scout, but to "Be Prepared" is looking for change before it happens, to be disciplined and fit, so you'll know the right thing to do and be willing to do it, at the right moment:

In the tire world, it could be the "right moment" to discipline an employee, offer a road-hazard to a customer, buy a piece of equipment or just be quiet. "It" comes from experience and years of input and reflection. "It" can't be bought.

As you know, it's a pet peeve of mine when tire manufacturers paint tires with a broad brush of rotation schedules and mileage expectations. They rarely deliver in the real world and in my opinion, are nonsensical numbers that some poor dealer has to defend to avoid losing money, when the customer comes back.

So I've taken a new approach: Let's be honest about it, let's be the expert and let's be prepared. Forget the notion that the tire manufacturer will help you with a mileage claim, no matter how legit it is and how closely you followed their recommendations. Mileage claims just don't happen outside a "goodwill" adjustment and it seems there is always a reason or "condition", besides the tire, to deny a claim.

So why are we following their rotation recommendations? No one ever complained they got their tires rotated too much. I recommend my

customers tires be rotated and checked every 5,000 miles or less. Because I'm the expert. I do it free, fast, and make it as easy as possible for the customer to have it done.

A new approach: When we sell tires today, let's ask the customer for the opportunity to be their "tire guy" and their expert, not the dealer. Let's ask them to come back for anything and everything related to their tires, and take good care of them when they do.

Let's take the tire business back from the car dealers, who conveniently schedule their rotations around their oil changes, and try scheduling our oil changes around rotations, because in the future I believe, "If you control the rotations, you'll control the customer"

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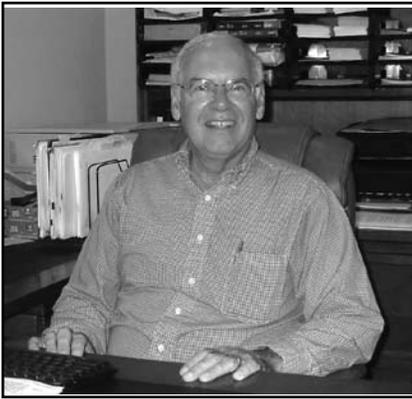
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Cole's Column

NETSA's **2014 Scholarship Golf Tournament** was another great success and raised \$11,173 toward our Scholarship Program. Golf Committee Chair – Jim Melvin Jr,

Registration Desk Chair Jack Kelley, and President Steve McGrath put on a wonderful event for our 92 players at the Shining Rock Golf Club in Northbridge, MA on September 12th. We wish to sincerely thank the **32 SPONSORS** for their enthusiastic support of our Industry and our Association. We have listed them separately, in the Road Runner, and encourage you to support those supporting you.

Our **Scholarship Committee** – Chaired by Tom Ferguson, announced our Sixteen 2014 Scholarship Winners in this issue of the Road Runner. We feature six of those sixteen in this issue, and will be featuring the other ten winners in the Winter Issue of the Road Runner. Congratulations to all.

Our **Benefits Committee** – Chaired by Jack Kelly, met on 9/11/14 to hear presentations from three Companies interested in being a NETSA Benefits Provider or expanding their benefit offerings. We wish to continue to offer Benefits to our members that allow you to save money by being a member of NETSA. One member reports to saving over \$7,000 a year and another member has saved over \$10,000 by taking advantage of our NETSA Benefits. We appreciate our many Benefits Providers, and thank them for their support (see the list in this issue).

Our **Trade Show Committee** - Chaired by Rich Tuttle, has announced this year's Trade Show & Convention will be at the Foxwoods Resort Casino in Mashantucket,

CT on March 20 & 21, 2015. Rich promises another informational and fun event for 2015 with our popular Friday/ Saturday schedule. We'll be mailing out more detailed information to all of you about the March 2015 event, after the first of 2015.

Our **Nominating Committee**, Chaired by Steve Dupoise, interviewed one candidate interested in joining our Board of Directors on September 11th. The Committee then presented the candidate to our Full Board, at our September meeting, and the Board voted to accept Don Foshay Jr (Don Foshay's Discount Tire & Alignment - Biddeford, ME) as a member of our NETSA Board. Congratulations Don

Our **NETSA Membership** this year (2014) has grown to **517 paid members**. We are very appreciative to all of you who are members during this tough economy, and our Board is continually striving to ensure your value in being a NETSA Member. We'll send out our 2015 Dues in November, which will remain the same as 2014, and encourage you to remain a NETSA member.

Dick Cole

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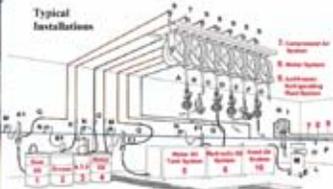
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From health care reform to closing the tax gap, recent changes to legislation make it more important than ever for restaurateurs to keep payroll top of mind. Taking the appropriate steps to stay on top of your payroll program — from properly onboarding a new hire to making timely changes to an employee's status — will help keep payroll headaches at bay. Make payday at your business a silent success staying on top of your payroll processing with these 10 best practices:

1. Note important payroll deadlines. Timeliness is a vital aspect of payroll for both employee relations and depositing payroll taxes to federal, state and local agencies. Late tax deposits can result in penalties and interest charges.
2. Classify employees appropriately. Classify your employees into categories such as temporary employees, consultants, and independent contractors to ensure your payroll reporting is accurate for tax purposes. This will help you avoid common pitfalls if your business is ever the subject of a payroll audit.
3. Report and calculate overtime pay. The proper classification of “exempt” and “non-exempt” employees is extremely important because an incorrect classification could be costly should your business be audited. According to the Department of Labor, litigation claiming “non-exempt” employees who were treated as “exempt” and not given their rightful overtime pay is an ever increasing problem.
4. Distribute 1099 forms on time. If you have any independent contractors and they are earning more than \$600 per year, they have to be given a completed 1099 form by January 31 of the year following their services. Then, the 1099 Form A must be mailed to the appropriate tax revenue department by the filing deadline of February 28 to avoid late penalties.
5. Double check data entries. Human error is an unfortunate certainty when it comes to data entry, but an even bigger error is not checking for these mistakes. An incorrectly entered hourly wage and the wrong number of employee hours per pay period can cost companies millions of dollars annually.
6. Send court-ordered payments to the proper recipient. If your business doesn't comply with court-ordered

garnishments, such as levies or child support, or if your payroll processor fails to submit those payments accurately, you may be prosecuted, fined— or even imprisoned.

7. Don't rely solely on the software program. Payroll software is only as good as the data entered for input. Make certain you collect every piece of information you need from your employees upon hire and update it when necessary. Once you have the information, enter all necessary payroll data into your program, or pass along the information to your payroll processor to ensure accurate calculations.
8. Save payroll records. Your business must maintain a comprehensive record for each employee — from time sheets to cancelled checks and W-4 forms. It's recommended that you keep these in a safe and accessible location for four to six years. Failure to do so could lead to criminal penalties and/or civil actions and the Wage and Hour Division of the Department of Labor must be able to inspect your records within 72 hours of notifying you.
9. Maintain payroll confidentiality. Be sure you're taking every precaution to maintain the privacy and security of your employees' information by keeping it within the payroll department and the senior management team.
10. Train more than one employee in payroll functions. The timely nature of payroll processing makes it essential to have more than one employee trained to manage the process. The IRS, the state and employees all need to receive payments on time even in your lead payroll employee is out of the office. It is also important to have a manual backup system in the event of computer failure.

At the end of the day, the two most important considerations you should take into account when evaluating your payroll processing are government compliance and employee satisfaction. By making sure your payroll processor is following the right path to efficient, accurate processing, you're helping to maintain employee satisfaction while preventing headaches with federal, state and local agencies.

To learn more, please visit email jennifer.dangelo@e-hps.com or call local Senior Manager Jennifer D'Angelo at 860-918-1495.





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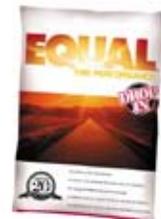


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Normally I write about digital marketing, or this time of year about winter tires. On these subjects I say "Do it. It's more important than you think." These things make customers safer and increase their visits to your shop.

But lately, what is on my mind is the upcoming

Chinese tire tariff/duty/embargo or whatever you want to call it. I think about the uncertainty it creates and how it affects everyone regardless of their size or what type of tires they sell.

First, let me start off by saying this article isn't supposed to be a positive or negative rant on the tire tariffs. Honestly, I am on the fence as to how I feel about them. This article is meant to show its cause, its reaction and how it affects us so that we might be able to spin this out-of-our-control thing into something positive, or at least something that is not negative for our businesses.

Let's start off by talking about the state of the industry as I saw it going into the first Chinese tire tariff a number of years ago. Tire prices were plummeting, and as a wholesaler, I saw my trucks costing the same to run while the profit for each was dropping. Even though I had access to cheap product, so did everyone else, meaning the profit margins didn't increase enough to make up for the lost dollar value. On the retail side, I try not to sell entry point product. However, I found myself having more and more customers coming in with low ball quotes. These quotes led to defensive conversations comparing apples to oranges where Tier 4 products were being compared with the name brand products I sold. When I heard about the tariff being implemented, I thought it would be a good thing because it would reset the whole price structure at a higher level.

In reality, many negative things that I had not foreseen also happened. A Korean winter tire brand that I had spent the last 4 years building market for moved their molds to China right before the tariff was announced. This led to them pulling the product from the US, which in turn led me to scramble for thousands of entry point winter tires- well after all the order deadlines had past. I ended my relations with a brand that I had put a lot of time, money and effort into building.

Another of my main manufacturers went into massive back order status after ripping their entry-point tire molds out

of China. They never took into consideration the fact that they didn't have capacity to build these extra tires at their other plants. This, of course, led to back orders on all their products, including their top tier, with wait times as long as eight months. In fact, all manufacturers went to a back order status at a level that I had only seen once in my memory. Tire prices spiked, and though profits increased, customer relations were negatively impacted and brand reputation was damaged. Both wholesale and retail customers were going away with disgust at the new, higher prices. Most would come back after calling around and realizing that the higher prices were the "new norm", but our business credibility took a hit that was longer to repair. As time went on things normalized. It took a few years, but people became used to the higher prices and the manufacturers all hedged their production strategy.

When the tariff finally ended, it was off the races yet again. At SEMA, I would see Chinese companies I had never even heard of with multi-million dollar booths and prices being thrown around that were orders of magnitude less than anything that had been seen during the tariff.

So here we are on the verge of going into another, even more penalizing tariff. Can we expect the same apocalyptic results? In short, I don't think so. There will be a price increase, and in some cases it will be drastic. There will be a supply crunch but nowhere near the level of the last one. The biggest threat will again, be to the credibility of your business.

Like it or not, we are in a need-based industry; one without a great reputation (which, in my opinion, is undeserved). People don't want tires like they want a new iPhone. Because of this need vs. want, the low-cost Chinese tires gave us the problem of "perceived value" for all tires. There probably isn't a customer alive that will be patient enough to listen to your whole explanation of why a Tier 1 product should cost three times as much, or how they are actually getting a better value when the cheap tire still comes with a 50k warranty. This is also why I don't have a tire search on my website. I find the average tire consumer derives value from price and mileage warranty while ignoring every other attribute when not educated.

So what's the good news? Most likely we will all make more money per tire sold. It will be up to you to educate yourself and the customer on what caused the spike and what goes into the price of a tire. You should have a well-rehearsed answer to why a premium tires is safer and a better value. Customer education is the best way to to make yourself "the tire guy" that people trust. Major industry upsets like this give you the opportunity to connect with the customer. When you can earn a customer's trust, it is worth its weight in gold.



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ASA Automotive Systems announced that their 2014 InfoExpo User Conference took place at the Hyatt Regency Austin on July 27-29, 2014 in Austin, Texas. In its 17th year, the InfoExpo reported attendance for the conference was more than 350 people. A memorable highlight of the conference was keynote Ross Shafer, a six-time Emmy Award-winning comedian, writer and TV host.

Net Driven has moved to a new Headquarters in Scranton, PA. where it held an open house on July 17, 2014. The 15,000 sq.ft. office space is complete with two conference rooms and a large working area with cubicles, along with some additional offices. More than half of Net Driven's staff not only has technology experience but also experience in the automotive industry.

Pete's Tire Barns Opens New 12,000 sq.ft. Store on August 8th in West Chesterfield, NH. This is their 19th full-service location in New England and features four passenger



and light truck tire service bays, three commercial tire service bays and a heavy duty alignment machine. It is a "green" tire store featuring geothermal heating and cooling, which allows the building's temperature to be controlled all without the use of fossil fuels. Pete's Tire Barns President, Peter Gerry, said "this building was designed from the ground up to be energy net plus, meaning eventually we will produce more power than we consume".

Odyssey Merchant Services Offers First Data's Clover™ Station to its clients. Odyssey says Clover is an innovative, cloud based business control and payment platform that gives small and mid-sized business owners the tools they need to manage their businesses. An apps-based business system where users can download apps to further customize the system to the user's needs. The cloud-based platform also uses tokenization and offers a high level of security that makes it appropriate for merchants in all industries.

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