

THE HORN

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**Automotive Aftermarket Association of the
Mid-South, Inc.**

*Serving the Automotive Aftermarket in North Carolina,
South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia*

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April 2019

2019 AAAMS Business Conference

AAAMS Business Conference September 12-15, 2019 The Margaritaville Resort, Gatlinburg, Tennessee

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The 2019 AAAMS Business Conference will be held September 12-15, 2019 at the **NEW** Margaritaville Resort in Gatlinburg, TN.

Business Conference Chair Doug Moore, Pickens, SC, will release the Conference Schedule and Registration/Room Reservation Information in the May 2019 issue of "The Horn."

Please join us and experience the Resort's wonderful island theme in the Smoky Mountains. Let's make this Conference one of our best ever—sharing time with old friends and making new ones.

AAAMS North Carolina Capitol Day in Raleigh

Join AAAMS in Raleigh for NC Capitol Day on May 15

The 4th Annual AAAMS North Carolina Capitol Day is scheduled for Wednesday, May 15, 2019 in Raleigh. Attendees will walk the halls of the Legislative Building and Legislative Office Building and meet with legislators from throughout the state.

This event gives members an opportunity to introduce themselves and their businesses to these lawmakers. It also gives the members a chance to promote the automotive aftermarket industry in North Carolina and make legislators aware of the concerns and issues regarding our industry.

The day will begin at 8:00 a.m. in the conference room of Vann & Attorneys, 1720 Hillsborough St., Raleigh, NC, with a briefing of the issues to be discussed with the legislators and their staffs, and conclude in the late afternoon at the Legislative Building after numerous visits. Lunch will be provided by the Association.

Please let Randy Lisk know at once if you will be able to attend. Call or email: 919-821-1314 or rlisk@aaamsonline.com.

LEGAL/LEGISLATIVE

Right to Repair Coalition Takes on Vehicle Data in Massachusetts

From Auto Care Association Capital Report

The Massachusetts Right to Repair Coalition has introduced legislation in the commonwealth protecting consumers' right to own and control the data generated by their vehicle. The bill would require new vehicle manufacturers to equip their vehicles with "an inter-operable, standardized and open access platform across all makes and models that is capable of securely communicating all telematics vehicle data in a standardized format via direct data connection to the platform." The bill would further require that the data be accessible by the owner or lessee of the vehicle through a mobile-based application and upon the authorization of the vehicle owner or lessee, all mechanical data shall be directly accessible by an independent motor vehicle repair facility or franchised dealer.

The proposed legislation seeks to respond to a growing number of vehicle manufacturers requiring their authorization in order to access a vehicle's on-board diagnostic (OBD) system. While these measures seek to provide cybersecurity protections, each car company is pursuing its own proprietary system, thus threatening to significantly increase tooling costs and grant them significant control over access to vehicle repair information. The bill would prohibit the use of any system that restricts access to the OBD port unless the systems are standardized across all makes and models and administered by an entity unaffiliated with a manufacturer.

The coalition has launched a commonwealth-wide grassroots and advertising campaign to educate Massachusetts policymakers, businesses and consumers about the threat that wireless technologies, sometimes referred to as telematics, pose to small business and consumer repair choice. The new legislation seeks to amend the Right to Repair law that was approved by Massachusetts voters in 2012 with 86 percent of the vote.



Attorney General

Josh Stein

CONSUMER ALERT

Watch out for fake letters about deployed servicemembers

Fort Bragg officials are warning people about a recent scam involving fake deployment letters.

You may receive a letter that appears to be signed by a high-ranking, legitimate military official, asking you to subscribe to a website to be able to keep in touch with friends or family members who are deployed. The letters that claim to be from Fort Bragg are signed by Fort Bragg Garrison Commander Col. Kyle Reed and refer people to a website called MilVPN-USaf. The website will then ask you to register, select a plan, and make a payment so you can contact the deployed servicemember.

These letters are a scam. Scammers often target members of the military and their relatives and attempt to take advantage of their fears and concerns for their loved one's safety. Watch out for people who try to exploit a military connection, and make sure you verify that they are who they claim to be. Never send money or share personal or financial information online with someone you don't know. If you do need to find out how to contact a loved one while they are deployed, contact your Family Readiness Liaison or chain of command.

Learn more about common military scams and ways to avoid them in our Military Consumer Protection Guide [ncdoj.emailnewsletter.us]. If you believe you or someone you know has been the victim of a scam, file a complaint with our office at ncdoj.gov/complaint [ncdoj.emailnewsletter.us] or 1-877-5-NO-SCAM.

OSHA Lists Top 10 Workplace Violations

The U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration has released the preliminary top 10 most frequently cited workplace violations for 2018:

1. Fall protection: 7,270 violations
2. Hazard communication: 4,552 violations
3. Scaffolding: 3,336 violations
4. Respiratory protection: 3,118 violations
5. Lockout/tagout: 2,944 violations
6. Ladders: 2,812 violations
7. Powered industrial trucks: 2,294 violations
8. Fall protection (training requirements): 1,982 violations
9. Machine guarding: 1,972 violations
10. Eye and face protection: 1,536 violations

Osha's Patrick Kapust encourages employers to use this list as "a guide for employers on what they should look at" when developing safety programs. Half of the violations come from the construction industry.

-- Courtesy of Shortliner



Social Security Changes are Coming in 2019

A higher tax cap: Workers will contribute 6.2% of their earnings to Social Security until their income exceeds \$132,900 in 2019, up from \$128,400 in 2018. Those that earn more than the taxable maximum will not have those earnings taxed by Social Security or used to calculate retirement benefits.

Larger earnings limits: Retirees who work and collect Social Security benefits at the same time, will be able to earn slightly more in 2019. Those who are younger than their full retirement age can earn up to \$17,640 in 2019, \$600 more than in 2018. One dollar in benefits will be withheld for every \$2 in earnings above the limit.

Once you turn your full retirement age there is no penalty for working after claiming retirement benefits and your benefit will be recalculated to give you credit for any withheld earnings.

An older full retirement age: Social Security's full-benefit retirement age has increased gradually due to legislation passed by Congress in 1983. Currently, the full benefit age is 66 years and 4 months for people born in 1956. 66 years and 2 months for those born in 1955 and for everyone born between 1943 and 1954, 66 years and no months.

The full retirement age will increase in two-month increments in subsequent years until it reaches age 67 for everyone born in 1960 or later. Benefits taken at age 62 will be reduced to 70% of the full benefit. Benefits taken at age 65 will be reduced to 86.7% of the full benefit.

There is a financial bonus for delayed retirement. An individual reaching the full-benefit age in 2019, receives an 8% increase for each year they delay collecting benefits up to age 70. When the full-benefit age reaches 67, benefits claimed at age 70 will be 24% higher due to that delay. The maximum retirement benefit for someone who waits until age 70 to collect benefits is \$3,538 a month.

Medicare taxes for 2019: The Medicare portion is 1.45% on all earnings. Individuals with earned income of more than \$200,000 (\$250,000 for married couples filing jointly) and \$125,000 for married taxpayers filing a separate return, will be assessed an additional 0.9 percent in Medicare taxes on all earnings over the limits listed above.

Bigger payments: The average monthly Social Security payment is expected to increase to \$1,461 in January 2019. Couples who are both receiving benefits will see their payments increase to \$2,448. The maximum possible Social Security benefit for a worker who begins collecting benefits at full retirement age will be \$2,861 up from \$2,788 in 2018. To get a personalized estimate of your future benefits, you will need to go to www.ssa.gov to create an online "my Social Security" account.

--Source: Social Security National Press Office

The A-Z of Dealing with a Customer who Doesn't Pay

03/27/19 by Larry Alton in *Small Business Operations*, excerpted by Sherry Robertson

Under ideal circumstances, all your customers will pay all their bills on time, every time you send one out. You'd be able to plan your cash flow management effectively. And you'd have plenty of revenue coming in. Unfortunately, we don't live in an ideal world. And sooner or later, a client will fail to pay. If one of your customers doesn't pay their invoice on time, what can you do to resolve the situation? First, you should know there are a few strategies that can help you avoid non-payment proactively:

Issue Clear, Easy-to-Pay Invoices

Consider relying on a comprehensive invoice template to guide your invoicing process. The clearer your invoice is, and the easier it is to pay, the more likely your customers will be to pay on time. So, for starters, make sure the terms and due date on the invoice are prominent. And you'll also want to suggest multiple payment methods. Make those methods as convenient as possible for your customers.

Run Background Checks

Not all businesses can be trusted to pay consistently. Run background checks (or credit checks, at a minimum) on the people with whom you do business. You'll be able to flag the companies most likely to have problems with payment. From there, you can choose not to do business with them, set stricter terms, or even mandate payments in advance.

Automate as Much as Possible

Automate your invoice system and include some automatic reminders for customers trying to pay those invoices. The more streamlined and consistent this is, the better — and apps will almost always be more reliable than human issuers.

Steps to Take If a Customer Doesn't Pay

What happens if you take these proactive measures and a customer still hasn't paid by the due date? These are the steps you can take:

1. **Issue a friendly email reminder:** Your first contact should be a friendly, non-judgmental one. People sometimes honestly forget to pay their invoices, and this is their chance to make up for that mistake. Remind them their payment is due and ask if there's any reason holding them up from paying. If they're dissatisfied with the services your company provided, or if they're facing a serious financial limitation, this is your chance to learn about it. In most cases, you'll get a "sorry about that" message, followed by a payment in a reasonable timeframe.
2. **Make a polite, but firm phone call:** If you've issued an email reminder or two, you'll want to escalate to the next stage. Make a polite, but firm phone call to the person in charge of issuing payments. Explain that you've issued multiple reminders to pay the bill and remind them how long ago the bill was initially due. Don't be aggressive or accusatory, but do insist that the invoice be paid as soon as possible, and offer some options for payment over the phone. Hopefully, you'll be able to clear things up at this stage.
3. **Offer a compromise:** If you're still struggling to get paid, you may consider offering a compromise. Try to find out what the holdup is and offer a compromise that makes both parties happy. For example, if your customer is having financial issues, offer to split the invoice into multiple smaller chunks, so the payments are more affordable. If your customer is unhappy with the services rendered, offer them a discount or additional services to make up for it.
4. **Consider invoice factoring:** Invoice factoring is a way to sell your accounts receivable to another company for collection. It's not a good first step if you're dealing with non-payment, but it's available if your company needs a cash injection and you're not having much luck with client communication. Here, you'll sell the invoice for approximately 70 to 90 percent of its full value, and you won't have to worry about collecting payment firsthand.
5. **Consult an attorney:** If you don't want to use invoice factoring or consult a collection agency, but you still aren't getting payments, consider consulting an attorney. If you're owed multiple thousands of dollars or more, taking legal action may be your best bet. An attorney will be able to provide you with more details about how this process could work.
6. **FINAL THOUGHTS:** Even if some of your customers are inconsistent with paying on time, it's rare that you'll need to resort to more aggressive collection methods. Most of the time, a few friendly reminders or a reasonable compromise are all it takes to get a full or partial payment for services rendered. But be proactive with all your customers and watch your incoming payments closely; the tighter your invoicing system is, the less you'll have to worry.

2019/2020 Leadership 2.0 Scholarship Available

AAAMS is excited to provide members with an exclusive offer for the opportunity of a \$6,250.00 Leadership 2.0 full scholarship being provided by the University of the Aftermarket Foundation at Northwood University again this year to members of the Alliance of State Automotive Aftermarket Associations (ASAAA).

Through AAAMS's affiliation with ASAAA and the University of the Aftermarket at Northwood University, members of the Automotive Aftermarket Association of the Mid-South are eligible to apply for the scholarship.

Another great benefit to pass on to your employees!

Leadership 2.0 is conducted in 2 one-week sessions at Northwood University: Fall 2019: August 11-16, 2019 in Midland, Michigan and Spring 2020: March 15-20, 2020 in Raleigh, NC. Candidates for the scholarship must be available to attend BOTH sessions and they are responsible for their own travel costs to and from both sessions.

The \$6,250.00 Leadership 2.0 scholarship covers tuition, materials and meals for the 2019-2020 2-week leadership 2.0 Program. The only out of pocket costs are airfare and lodging.

A simple one-page ASAAA Scholarship Application for this Leadership 2.0 Scholarship is available from AAAMS. Submit application and all supporting documentation to AAAMS, your regional association, via email or fax for receipt **no later than May 31, 2019** application deadline to:

AAAMS, Inc.
PO Box 97993
Raleigh, NC 27624
Email: rlisk@aaamsonline.com
Fax: 919-821-0753

AAAMS must submit applications to ASAAA by the end of the day on May 31. For more information, contact Randy at the AAAMS office. For additional information about the Leadership 2.0 program, visit www.universityoftheaftermarket.com and click on Leadership 2.0.



Kennedy Office Answers the Question: “What’s the deal with Copy Paper?”

As you may have noticed, the price of copy paper has been on the rise beginning in 2018 and into 2019. While office products vendors could once boast \$28.99 for a 10-ream carton of paper, you will now see prices upwards of \$55.99 for a 10-ream carton.

2018 and Q1 of 2019 have brought price increases on many products including all paper goods industry wide. There are several reasons for the increases but for paper there is simply less demand. As a result, paper mills are moving away from producing cut paper and turning their focus to producing raw materials like pulp which can be used in a variety of products. Most recently, one of the largest paper manufacturers in the US, Georgia-Pacific, announced they will completely shut down their remaining paper producing operations thus driving even more price increases.

To lessen consumer sticker shock, vendors will promote specials, rebates, and “pay for pricing” programs. Initially these offers seem like great deals but end up being all smoke and mirrors with prices changing by the day. You will also see smaller quantities offered in a carton to make the price seem lower. For instance, there will be an ad for 20lb 92br copy paper at \$24.99 a carton but the small print will reveal 5 reams in a carton vs the usual 10.

A lot of time and effort can be spent chasing the best paper price whether at a retail store or online. Kennedy Office customers find savings and value in a customized purchasing plan designed around their specific needs. AAAMS members can benefit from participating in a collective paper buying program from Kennedy Office. It is our goal to add value and savings by offering a customized pricing program, free next day delivery and excellent customer service. For more information please reach out to Alix Hock at Kennedy Office 919-878-5400.

Speedway Superfleet Fuel Discounts for AAAMS Members

This is a reminder for Automotive Aftermarket Association of the Mid-South (AAAMS) members that the convenience stores of Speedway have partnered with the Association through their proprietary fuel card program called SuperFleet and now every member will earn .15 cents off per gallon for the first three months at any of the 4,000 Speedway locations nationwide on the SuperFleet program.

As an added bonus because you are a member, you will continue to earn .05 cents off per gallon at all Speedway locations thereafter and there are no minimums necessary.

AAAMS Services, Inc., will also earn a rebate every time you use the SuperFleet card at Speedway too.

If you don't have a Speedway near you, that's okay, you can still use the card wherever MasterCard is accepted. There are over 2,700 Speedway fueling locations in the U.S. and over 175,000 locations nationwide that accept MasterCard cards.

SuperFleet is currently recommended by other Automotive Aftermarket Associations throughout the country and the programs have been extremely successful. Gas prices are rising, so why not join up and save anywhere you can?

Refer to the flyer on page 8 of this newsletter for more details.



Save these dates!

MAY 2019

- May 15 -- **AAAMS North Carolina Capitol Day** - Raleigh, NC.
- May 19 -- **AAAMS Board of Directors Meeting** - Greensboro, NC.

SEPTEMBER 2019

- September 12-15 -- **2019 AAAMS Annual Business Conference** - The Margaritaville Resort, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.
- September 13 -- **AAAMS Board of Directors Meeting** - Gatlinburg, Tennessee.
- September 27-28 -- **Automotive Service & Technology Expo** - Cary, NC.

NOVEMBER 2019

- November 3-7 -- **Automotive Aftermarket Week/AAPEX Show** - Las Vegas, NV.



Memorial Day

The AAAMS Office will be closed on Monday, May 27, 2019, in observance of Memorial Day.

-- Randy Lisk, Executive Vice President

AAAMS North Carolina Capitol Day May 15, 2019



Please join us for our fourth annual Automotive Aftermarket Association of the Mid-South Capitol Day event on May 15, 2019 at the North Carolina State Capitol in Raleigh, NC.

North Carolina members, you are cordially invited to participate in a full day of legislative sessions and visits with elected officials as we seek to personally advocate for our industry's priorities.

Experience the legislative process first-hand as you travel to North Carolina's capital city and participate in meetings with members of the North Carolina legislature and the Executive branch.

We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity and join us at the Capitol to promote the industry, the association, our businesses and legislative issues with new elected officials and existing friends of our industry.

For more information, please contact:

Randy Lisk
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Phone: (919) 821-1314
Email: rlisk@aaamsonline.com



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Association of the Mid-South for your special
15¢ discount.

†Limited time offer valid for new Speedway SuperFleet MasterCard applications received from 3/1/2019 through 4/30/2019. New approved accounts will earn a 15 cents per gallon rebate on Speedway fuel purchases in the first three months after account opening. Rebates are cents per gallon based on the number of gallons purchased at Speedway locations per billing cycle. The maximum promotional rebate earnings are on 2,000 gallons per month regardless of billing terms.

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*Fees may apply