Serving the Membership of the Missouri Auto & Truck Recycler Association

August/September 2020

Focus on Fundamentals Part 4 of a 5-part series\*

# **Quality is Job 1** The Importance of Consistency in Your Process

### By Marty Hollingshead

In my role with ARA as a mentor, I created some basic instructions for Recyclers that I am mentoring. After looking at this first one, I said to myself, "This is something that is relevant and of use to all recyclers, myself included." I think that we all from time to time need to focus on our fundamentals. It gets very easy to lose sight of this. I also think that simpler is better and less is more.

In previous articles, we covered sales basics, employees, and inventory. We will now talk about your procedures and processes and how doing these things properly can lead to a quality product and top-notch customer service.

First, ask yourself this question: Which people in your company are involved in customer service? The answer is: everyone! The thing to remember here is that whether the end result is good or bad, it's usually never one reason or one person. This is why it is crucial to have consistency, and all employees need to be focused on one goal. That goal is: delivering a quality product that meets or exceeds the customer's expectations.

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Find information on membership including the membership application at www.matronline.com/associate.html

Check us out online at www.matronline.com

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Missouri Automobile and Truck Recyclers Association

## Missouri Auto & Truck Recyclers News

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Focus on Fundamentals... continued from cover

# So, let's take a look at what a good process should be:

- Storage and Handling: Do you have a system in place to properly store and handle your inventory to prevent and/or minimize damage? Damaged goods result in unnecessary credits as well as lost sales.
- 2. **Transportation:** Do you protect your parts from transportation damage? Do you have the right vehicles and are they properly equipped to protect your parts from damage in transit? This is very important when you are selling sheet metal (collision parts). We have found that investing in products such as "Panel Armor" and moving blankets, have more than paid for themselves in lost

revenue from damage that is now prevented.

- 3. **Preparation:** Do you clean your parts? Do you do things to enhance them and make them look better? Regardless of who your customer is, from a walk-in customer to the fussiest body shop, no dirty part should leave your facility. Your parts should all be clean regardless of what the part is. You can take two identical parts, one clean and one dirty, and you can show them to anybody from a layman to an expert, and they will always tell you that the cleaner part is the better part. You really need to invest the time and effort to make your parts look as good as possible.
- 4. **Quality Control:** Do you have a quality control program? Do

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you have a dedicated person(s) assigned to that area? If you don't, this is the first thing that you should think about doing. Remember, no matter who you are selling to, your parts represent your company. Basic stuff, like making sure it is the correct part, correct side, and off the correct vehicle is a good place to start. Does the condition of the part match the description? If not, was the salesperson told and did the salesperson contact the customer and communicate the issue?

5. Communication: Does your sales staff do a good job of communicating with your customers? Do they also do a good job of setting realistic expectations? Whenever a customer tells me that the part must be perfect. I proceed to tell them "New or used, there is no such thing as a perfect part." We look at credits and returns not so much from a lost revenue standpoint, but from a standpoint of "what did we do wrong where this part did not meet the customer's expectations, and what can we do to do a better job?" Make sure your salespeople are trained to ask the right questions and get all of the necessary information for each request. Too often, when a deal goes awry, it always seems to be the customer's fault. The thing to remember here is, we are the professionals, and we can nip a lot of issues in the bud by simply getting all of the right information.

Our number one priority should be to always strive to improve our processes with the goal of consistently delivering quality products, on time and as described.

Under-promise and Over-deliver! A satisfied customer is a steady customer!

Remember, the keys to success are: work hard, do a good job, and above all, be fair and honest with your customers.

### Support your State Association! Support ARA, the only association for Auto Recyclers!

\*The articles in the Focus on Fundamentals series appeared in the MATR News as follows:

- "Sales Basics 101" is Part 1 and appeared in the Dec2019/Jan 2020 issue
- "Employees A Company's Best Asset" is Part 2 and appeared in the April/May 2020 issue
- "Your Inventory: What You Buy, How You Show It, and How You Price It" is Part 3 amd appreared in the June/July 2020 issue

Marty Hollingshead has been in the business since 1973 and the owner of Northlake Auto Recyclers, Inc., Hammond, Indiana, since 1984. Marty is the current Secretary of ARA, and is a board member of the Indiana Automotive Recyclers Association. Both Marty and Northlake have received numerous awards and recognition for excellence in the industry and the community. You can reach Marty by phone: 219-937-3960, or visit his website: www.narparts.com.





# **Converter Recycling: Playing the Long Game**

### By Becky Berube

### A Historical Perspective

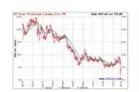
Nearly thirty years ago I started my career as a Customer Service Representative at Putman Investments in Boston. The Gulf War was in full swing. Like life in the time of COVID-19, the world was on shifting sand. In handling calls, we were trained to calm investors' fears and remind them that mutual funds were a long-term investment, five to ten years. It was best not to change course and become reactionary.

Today, my advice to you is the same with converter recycling and precious metals sales. Play the long game. Look at the Platinum Group Metals over the past 10 years. (Charts: Kitco) We have experienced more than one deep recession. See also light duty vehicle sales from 1978-2020.

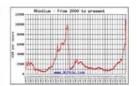
(Graphic: Wards)

### Converter Averages: Today, 2 Months Ago, 22 Months Ago

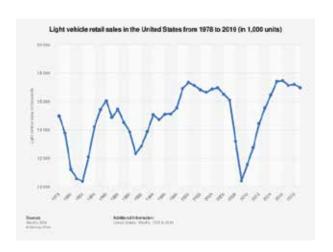
Look at these converter averages and average price per pound today versus two months ago and twenty-two months ago. Remember these are random samples from recycling data across North America in USD. (Data: United Catalyst Corporation). In the past 22 months converter averages enjoyed an 83% increase while giving up 32% in recent months. Still values are almost double what they were nearly two years ago.







## Platinum Group Metals 10-Year



### **An Important Source of Cash Flow**

Amidst COVID-19, with lower new car sales, corrections in precious metal pricing, and supply and demand coming into equilibrium, the revenue from converter recycling remains steady and important to recyclers. Precious metals mining and refining has not been left unscathed. There have been some mine closings in South Africa, some smelters and trade

desks that are not taking bids or receiving material due to lack of liquidity, staff reductions, and smelting/refining capacity issues. Fortunately, the slower turn times are offset by the steady values recyclers can count on flowing into their companies from converter and precious metal sales.

## 2-Month Change on Averages

April '20
Pt \$717.00
Pd \$2,065.00
Rh \$4,465.00

P/Cat \$154.00
P/Lb. \$78.00

Februar	y '20		
Pt	\$979.00		
Pd	\$2,568.00		
Rh	\$11,965.00		
P/Cat	\$229.00		
P/Lb.	\$116.00		

### 22-Month Change on Averages

April '19	
Pt	\$848.00
Pd	\$1,350.00
Rh	\$2,600.00
P/Cat	\$105.00
P/Lb.	\$48.00

June '18				
Pt	\$905.00			
Pd	\$955.00			
Rh	\$1,930.00			
P/Cat	\$84.00			
P/Lb.	\$38.00			



### One Way. Assay.

I will say it until I am blue in the face, assay-based selling with a process, a program, and a partner you can trust (and verify) is the only way to maximize the money you get for your cats with any certainty.

In life there is more than one way to do most things. This is not true with converter recycling. There is a specific amount of precious metals in each converter. There is a cost to recycle it. There is a price for each metal that is sold. You're either in the real game or you are not. You are either getting treated fairly or you are not.

# The 4 P's of Converter Recycling Profitability

In recent articles I have written that you need a Process, a Program, and a Partner you can trust, and you need to learn the Power of Education. A Process. You can sell on assay instead of selling by the piece. You will need to be paid on a sample and assay that are official, accurate, and verifiable. A Program. You need to be able to get money when you need it to run your business. Getting you the most money from your converters shouldn't mean you have to wait until you have a truckload or can hold out for 3 months to get paid. With most processors, you have payment choices like the ones mentioned above. A Partner. Selling on assay or recovery helps to eliminate that problem because there is a test result that can be considered the basis for the sale. However, even with this method, working with a Partner you can trust cannot be overstated. The Power of Education. We take a complex process and try to make it understandable and easy to use. We know that once you learn about your converters and your yard profile, you will increase your profits, and no one will ever be able to take advantage of you again.

### Remember, keep selling into the market on assay. Don't take unnecessary risks. Play the long game.

To learn more about selling converters on assay or to read other articles in this series, please email me at sales@united-catalystcorporation.com or call us at 864-834-2003.

Becky Berube serves the recycling community as President of United Catalyst Corporation, Member of the Automotive Recycling Association's Educational Programming Committee, and is Vice President of the International Precious Metals Institute.





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# **\$CALL = NO Call: Should YOU Put Your Prices Online?**

### By Theresa Colbert

Ever since I came to work at Car-Part.com, I have had this debate at least once a week with a recycler. The recycler tells me the MANY reasons they can't or won't put prices online. Trust me, I have heard them all!

Let me tell you an example that I use in one of the classes that I give:

I need new bathroom towels and I want a pretty green color; I go to Target.com and the website says:

- Really nice fluffy green towels \$CALL
- Pretty decent green towels \$CALL
- Cheap green towels \$CALL

Hmmmm, that's odd. If I wanted to call Target, I would have. But I am looking online. Let me check Kohls.com.

- Really nice fluffy green towels \$12.99
- Pretty decent green towels \$7.99
- Cheap green towels \$2.99

But wait, if you buy 6 green towels, we will give you FREE SHIPPING!



Do you honestly think that there is any chance in the world that I am going to CALL Target to ask for the price of their towels? No way!! I am going to buy them from Kohl's right now and get free shipping!

This raises the question: why do some yards think that not having prices online is OK?

Another example: My Aunt Judy is looking for an alternator for her 2011 Impala. There are 35 in her area. 25 have prices, and 10 don't. Guess who is not getting Aunt Judy's money? Aunt Judy does ALL of her shopping online and she may not be looking for the cheapest. She may want one with a picture of the part so that she knows it's the correct one or she may be looking for low miles. But the one thing I know about Aunt Judy and the vast majority of our customers is that they want to know how much the part is before they ever call you!

I know that I talk about "online sales" a LOT! But, it is my personal belief that even before COVID-19, we were moving into a vast majority of our sales being online. Now? I think it will be sooner rather than later!

As always, if you have any questions, comments or ideas please email me, text me or call me at TheresaC@Car-Part. com or 859-802-2382 Please, be SAFE out there!!

Thanks, Theresa



Let's Talk Recalls . . .

# **Heard about the 21/90 Rule?**

Creating New Habits while shedding Old Habits is Critical to Business and Takata Airbags

### By Katie Stark and Paul D'Adamo

### **Creatures of Habit**

We all know about Bad Habits because we tell ourselves that we will change some of them in our New Year Resolutions. Some of us are successful at stopping bad habits but it usually doesn't happen without starting a new habit. Have you heard of the 21/90 rule? It usually takes 21 days to make a habit and 90 days to make it a permanent lifestyle change. It's no different in the Auto Recycling Industry; by nature, we are "creatures of habit". Ask anyone who has switched their YMS (yard management system) how easy it was to change habits for themselves and their employees. Most people would agree that once they got past the first month the transition got easier, and once 90 days had passed, it's like you have always had it.

# The Most Expensive Words in Business

Have you heard the phrase "We've always done it that way"? This phrase is a testament to old habits that are not keeping up with the times and probably costing you more than you could ever imagine. We have developed habits for every phase of our business; inventorying parts, dismantling vehicles,

draining fluids, shipping, deliveries and everything else that happens at your location. But your success in recovering airbags is measured by your commitment to incorporating new habits into your daily processes. Recyclers have established new habits and are now validating vin's for every vehicle at check-in to determine if it has Recalls. Some of you are using our Mobile YAPP (yard airbag app) and others are using our Desktop Software.

### The habits you develop today for Takata Airbags will pay dividends down the road

RAS has developed a robust platform (mobile and desktop) for Recyclers to identify, process, and ship airbags. Each of these stages require you to develop new habits. What does the future hold? We all know that it is illegal to sell recalled parts. But how do we know which parts are recalled, you might ask? Buddy Innovations has taken the initiative on this front. The Buddy Inventory device will identify all parts on recall for you. There is no doubt the major Yard Management Systems will look to incorporate this technology into their inventory process as well. We be-

lieve the Takata Recall has provided a foundation for recyclers to recognize the liability threat of recalls and given them incentive to develop new habits to handle them, whether they have bounty on them or not.

The 21/90 Rule is real. What is your timetable? What new habits need to be established at your business? Are they housekeeping habits? Dismantling habits? Inventory habits? Recall habits? The 21/90 rule must start at the top, but it is equally important to get your team accustomed to changing their ways and soon you will create a "Culture of Change".

# Need help developing good Recall habits?

Simply call or email Paul the Recall Guy at 401-458-9080 or pdadamo@core-supply.com. An Industry Veteran of 30 years, Paul has been diligent about initiating New Habits to keep up with the ever evolving auto recycling industry.



# MISSOURI AUTO & TRUCK RECYCLER MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

# **Benefits of Membership**

- MATR retains legislative services in Jefferson City to monitor proposed new laws, changes in current laws and proposed Rule changes all to protect the business interest of our members.
- MATR publishes a newsletter 6 times a year at no charge with the latest information on business tips, and other subjects
  ranging from insurance, updates on new products and services and more.
- MATR maintains a web site at www.matronline.com featuring information about the industry for consumers, A part search, newsletter archive, and an on-line membership roster with direct links to member web sites (if available).
- MATR produces an annual convention & trade show featuring exhibitors showing off their latest products and services.
   This is a great networking opportunity to share and learn from other recyclers. See what works and what doesn't.
- MATR maintains a relationship with the Sterling Group to provide credit card processing at a reduced rate for members.
- MATR maintains an office reachable 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by phone or fax.

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Business Phone:			_Fax:		
County:					
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Owner/Key Contact	E-Mail:				
Please check one:	☐ Regular Member  Additional Locations are cha			\$275.00	

#### CHECKS SHOULD BE PAYABLE TO MATR

Active/Regular Membership: 1) Applicant must be any individual, corporation, firm, partnership, incorporated or unincorporated association or any other legal or commercial entity with ownership interest in an automobile and truck recycling business operated within the State of Missouri, 2) holds a valid Missouri salvage dealers license, and 3) derives a substantial portion of the income from the dismantling, sale and/or exchange of used automobile and truck parts provided, however, that a person, who does not possess an ownership interest in an automobile and truck recycling business operated within the State of Missouri but who is engaged as the full-time manager of such a business and would otherwise qualify for membership, with the written consent of the owner thereof not be denied membership.

**Associate Membership**: Any entity or person not meeting the eligibility requirements for active membership as herein above provided shall upon the approval of the Membership Committee be eligible to become an Associate Member of the Association.

All Missouri recyclers are encouraged to join MATR and make a difference by getting involved.

Support your state association and reap the benefits!

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- ▶ Third Party Companies Integrated in Inventory Buddy
  - IAA Data Service Helps identify and select interchange (requires a IAA user and password)
  - RAS Cores Manage and sell cores within the worksheet on the tablet and the Final Desktop Review (requires
    a user and password)
  - **URG Cores** 60 day free trial for non URG Members. Have access to all the core companies nationwide. Included in your URG benefits.
  - **Comp Nine Total VIN Decoder** Actual manufacturer build sheets on domestic VINs. Use as a reference tool to select interchange (Subscription additional).

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