



Missouri NEWS

Auto & Truck Recyclers

Serving the Membership of the Missouri Auto & Truck Recycler Association

December 2020/January 2021

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From the President

By Chris Richardson

My fellow auto recyclers,

First of all, I wanted to let you all know up front that I am refusing to step down as president. There will be no new transition to another president. Just me.... Don't worry... Just kidding. However, I will be with you another year as president. My year was sort of cut short due to Covid, so I am hoping that 2021 is better. As the year comes to an end I wanted to share my thoughts with you regarding the past 12 months, the recent election, COVID & the New Year that is quickly approaching.

One year ago, things for all of us were much different. We were not wearing masks, we all had plenty of toilet paper, "quarantine" wasn't a word we used daily & all our children were going to school in person. None of us were thinking about or worried about a virus that would change every aspect of our daily lives. But here we are. And it looks like COVID-19 is going to be sticking around well into 2021.

However, it hasn't been all bad. Salvage yards are essential, so we all got to stay open. And many yards have actually seen an increase in business. Used parts have become more valuable now that manufacturing has slowed. And many yards have learned about new ways to get their parts into the hands of customers. Ebay has become a saving grace for many yards. We have also all become more adaptable. With the situation changing almost weekly in some areas we all had to learn to think on our toes and make changes accordingly. Adding Plexiglas barriers, masks available for customers & employees, outdoor parts pick up & contact free delivery has all helped to show consumers that our industry is capable of handling whatever comes our way. Covid has actually helped many yards understand the importance of technology as well as utilizing new strategies & approaches in today's ever-changing business atmosphere.

From the President... continued on page 7

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

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

The Customer Experience: Surveys, Reviews, and Feedback

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, Inventory, Procedures and Processes. All of these areas revolve around the three P's, which are People, Process, and Product. We will tie all of this together with the importance of Customer Service and the perceptions that are created for individual businesses and the industry as a whole.

What used to be called "Customer Service" is now referred to as "The Customer Experience."

I believe in keeping things simple, and I also think that less can be more. Recently, I had to make a purchase from Grainger. I'm sure most people in this business are familiar with this company. They are the "go-to" place for pretty much anything industrial.

At the beginning of my call, which was answered by a machine, I was asked if I would be willing to take part in a short survey at the end of my call. Out of curiosity, I said "Yes." Usually, what this means is that a short call isn't so short. So, at the end of my order, to my surprise, the survey asked me two simple questions. Question 1 was, would I hire the person that just took care of me in my company? Question 2 was, was I satisfied with my ordering experience? These were two simple questions that really struck me as being very profound.

The next day I was in my office talking with a friend in the business about this, and I had to place another order with Grainger, so I had him listen to this call. After the machine answered the call and asked about the survey again, it proceeded to tell me that there will be a wait for my call to be answered. I told my friend that I did not hear that yesterday. Guess what, within ten seconds, my call was answered.

The salesperson first identified me as a customer, asked me for my name, and asked me what I needed. Throughout the whole ordering process, she addressed me by name. I told her that I wanted to pick up my order at my local branch location. She repeated my order to me verbatim, she verified and



repeated the location of the branch store where I wanted to pick up this order, then told me when my order would be ready for pickup and asked if there was anything else that I needed. On this phone call, she addressed me by name six times, and this was a small-ticket order with only three items, which totaled less than \$75.

Suffice it to say that their sales representatives are very well-trained. This company realized the importance of the customer experience and proper training and have done a great job of delivering on both.

Have they found the “secret sauce” in how to combine technology and human interaction to compete with the likes of Amazon?

So, how does this apply to us?

Perception is reality. This is what others think of you and your company. What does the Customer Experience mean to you? How do you take care of your customers? Are your salespeople trained to be courteous, professional, and knowledgeable when dealing with customer requests? Do they take the time to ask all of the right questions to ensure that the customer is going to get the correct part? Are they communicating realistic expectations? Remember, it is always best to under-promise and over-deliver.

Warranties: Backing what you sell

Let’s take a look at customer perception and expectations. A customer is calling you because they expect good service

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and a quality product. Warranties are like insurance, in that the customer has the expectation that if there is a problem, it will be taken care of. Like insurance, you don't know if a warranty is good or bad until you make a claim.

When a claim is made by a customer, what do you do? Do you help the customer? Do you find a solution, or do you look for a way out of honoring that claim? The smart approach here is: good, bad or ugly, warranty your product and take care of the customer. Is the cost of not eating a warranty worth the bad will that it will bring?

Remember this, a happy customer may only tell a few people, but an unhappy customer will tell anyone who will listen. With the internet and social media, bad will can now be magnified dramatically. If you want to know how good a job a company is doing with that war-

ranties, just take a look at their online reviews.

Most customers, when researching a company, will almost always look at reviews to help them make their decision.

This is the new "word of mouth" folks, only it is more powerful and influential than ever. Remember this, good reviews will drive new customers to your business, and bad reviews will drive them away. This is perception and this is the reality. Whether it is through reviews or surveys, you should always ask for and pay attention to customer feedback. If you have a bad review, work the problem and offer a solution and an apology if necessary.

Remember, a satisfied customer is a steady customer.

**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 and appeared in the June/July 2020 issue
- "Quality is Job 1 - The Importance of Consistency in Your Process" is Part 3 and appeared in the June/August/September 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.nar-parts.com.

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From the President... continued from the cover

But now it does seem inevitable that we will have a new president. I know many of us are concerned about President-Elect Biden's stance on Electric vehicles and how the whole "cash for clunkers" program may be coming back. Inevitably, there will be changes. But we shouldn't worry to much. After the past year & what we have had been through, we should all feel very confident that whatever happens, salvage yards can handle it. One year ago none of us thought we would have been able to make all the changes we have made, but we did. We made it through the craziness of 2020 in tact. So I say bring on 2021. It can only get better from here!

Marty Satz



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Theresa's Top Five Tips for Selling Used Parts Online

By Theresa Colbert

If any of you have been to my Selling Used Parts in an On-line World class, you know that I love, love, LOVE online sales! eBay, Car-Part.com – selling online makes me happy! Here are my top 5 tips for selling used parts online:

1. Great pictures

- Go look at pictures from other yards that you admire and try to copy them
- Make sure the background doesn't have clutter
- A white background is what makes pictures pop – look at Amazon!

2. Clean parts

- If you are looking online and YARD ABC has a clean part with nice pictures for \$50 and YARD XYZ has a dirty part laying out on the ground for \$25, which one would you buy?

3. Great descriptions

- If you are writing great descriptions for eBay, why not put your parts on Car-Part.com with great descriptions?
- MRN does not mean MAROON to most people who aren't in our industry.
- 2D1 does not tell my Aunt Judy that there is a dent the size of a credit card in location 2.

4. Follow through

- When you describe an item as 000, make sure it gets to your customer as 000!
- If the item has a "light scratch," tell the customer that from the beginning.
- "Item exactly as described," is the #1 compliment a yard should want to see!

5. Price your parts

- I have to repeat this one several times a year – having \$CALL as the price is the kiss of death. No one who is looking online wants to call you for a price.

In my research for some of my classes, I found some interesting tidbits from eBay that I would like to share with you:

- 40% of consumers have recently increased or significantly increased online purchasing.
- In Q2, eBay's active buyers grew by 8M, up to 182M.
- Nearly 36% of US consumers are now buying retail goods online, compared to 29% who were doing so in mid-April.
- More than half of millennials and Gen Z consumers say they believe their lockdown habits will continue.

I found these numbers quite fascinating! I hope that you do as well! As always, if you have any questions or comments, please contact me! I love hearing from you! Have a great month!

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Let's Talk Recalls . . .

GM Recalls 5.9M Vehicles to Replace Takata Airbags

By *Katie Stark and Paul D'Adamo*

Why are these Takata Airbags being recalled now?

It seems ironic that we were just alerted to a Volvo Airbag Recall last month. NHTSA has concluded that the GM inflators are subject to the same issues; moisture, temperature, and age making them vulnerable as a safety hazard.

GM had petitioned NHTSA over the last four years to exclude them from the Recall. GM claimed that the Takata-made airbag inflators did not have the same deterioration as the other vehicles. GM asserts that these vehicles had a lower risk of rupture due to "unique design differences."

The original Recall of Takata airbags was based on inflators igniting with explosive force, sending metal shards throughout the passenger cabin. The actual cause was determined to be a lack of a chemical drying agent for the propellant. Environmental moisture, high temperatures, and age would cause the ammonium-nitrate-based propellant to inflate improv-

erly, resulting in the inflator's premature rupture. Recently, NHTSA denied GM's petition to avoid the Recall.

Many of the GM Models recalled are familiar to Auto Recyclers, Chevrolet, GMC, and Cadillac Trucks and SUV's from the model year 2007 through 2014. Only the passenger airbags will need to be replaced.

RAS recommendation.

Do not remove any airbags in these vehicles until we have the VIN's loaded into our Recall Software. EPA guidelines allow for the removal of airbags only if there is a "sale" or "recall" shipment being prepared. It is not recommended or permitted for you to store airbags at your facility. Leaving them in the vehicles until such time where they will be crushed or shredded is a legitimate disposition.

Airbags put Recyclers in the Crosshairs.

There seems to be a pattern with airbags. As airbags age in vehicles and further

testing is done, it is possible that other makes and models will be recalled. For Recyclers, selling airbags has become a perilous business. Once we thought it was safe to sell GM Truck and SUV airbags, we now find ourselves in the predicament of knowing that we have sold them, but now they are recalled. Many Recyclers have excluded ALL airbags from their parts available for sale list due to recalls' hazards. This might be a good time to review your corporate policies related to the sale of Airbags.

There is no "traceability" component currently in any of the Yard Management Systems. Wikipedia defines traceability as the ability to verify the history, location, or application of an item by means of documented recorded identification.

When can we expect to start recovering GM Recalls?

NHTSA has given 30 days to submit a plan for their Recall. We at RAS expect to have the VINs loaded into our web/desktop/mobile platforms in early January.

Questions on airbag recalls? Call or email Paul the Recall Guy at 401-458-9080 or pdadamo@coresupply.com.

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- 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.
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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
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