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(Inset photo courtesy Prefix Corp.)

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Jef White
Editor
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What Workers Want

Looking to energize and engage your hourly workers? You may want to start with something other than a pay raise.

Homebase, a team management app that helps more than 100,000 local small businesses manage their hourly teams, released results from its latest Hourly Worker Pulse Check, surveying nearly 500 small business hourly workers on their top concerns and priorities heading into fall.

A top takeaway—despite inflation increases, competitive wages are not the highest priority for hourly workers. Schedule control and flexibility (57%) and good team relationships (54%) are the two most popular factors for workers in deciding where to work, with wages coming in third (44%).

More good news for employers is that 77% of hourly workers are happy with their jobs. This is compared to only 51% of the overall American workforce who say they are highly satisfied, according to Pew Research.

One thing to watch is that hourly workers say they have decreased optimism around future jobs. Despite a rosier outlook from economists, only 34% of hourly workers think their job options will improve in 12 months, which has dropped steadily since July 2022 (42%), Homebase reveals.

Inflation is also still top of mind, with 64% reporting being worried about it—up from 56% in June 2023. Longer working hours are another growing concern, according to 23% of respondents (up from 19% in June 2023), which may be a signal that seasonal hiring is necessary to relieve some pressure.

"In spite of reports about a cooling labor market, our Pulse Check reveals the unique point of view of hourly workers," says John Waldmann, Homebase Founder and CEO. "Workers remain happy with their jobs, but they're concerned about inflation and future prospects, as well as longer working hours. Consistent wage inflation this summer has led to schedule flexibility and team relationships overtaking wages as the top two priorities for workers. We'll keep an eye on seasonal hiring and changing worker concerns heading into fall."

Meanwhile, the most recent U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics report finds average hourly earnings increased by 4.3% year-over-year in August, showing wage gains have slowed some since last year's peak of 5.9%.

Higher wages are, of course, always welcomed, even if other priorities are having a greater effect on worker satisfaction. ***TS***

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THE SHOP (ISSN 2380-7415) is published monthly by Cahaba Media Group, P.O. Box 530067, Birmingham, AL 35253. Periodicals postage paid at Birmingham, AL and additional mailing offices. Free to qualified recipients within the United States and U.S. Possessions. Publisher reserves the right to determine qualifications. Annual Subscription Prices: U.S. – one year, $45; two years, $80; three years, $108. Canada – one year, $76; two years, $142, three years, $201 (U.S. Funds); All other countries – one year $98, two years $186, three years, $267 (U.S. funds). Customer Service, call 800-256-2785. POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to THE SHOP, PO Box 271, Lincolnshire, IL 60069-9835. All items submitted to THE SHOP become the sole property of THE SHOP and Cahaba Media Group and cannot be reproduced without the written consent of the publisher. Advertisers and/or their agencies, jointly and severally, assume all liabilities for printed advertisements in THE SHOP. Opinions expressed in THE SHOP may not necessarily reflect the opinion of the magazine, its management or its advertisers. Letters, photographs and manuscripts welcome. VOLUME 26, NO. 6

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ORGANIC Marketing

10 healthy ways to grow your business.

By Barry Alt

Marketing your automotive aftermarket restoration, performance, off-road, race or restyling shop goes beyond showcasing your products and services. It's about building connections that fuel growth, customer loyalty and industry recognition.

Organic marketing, in particular, takes center stage in propelling your shop to new heights.

Unlike a traditional, pedal-to-the-metal marketing approach, a successful organic marketing strategy follows a smoother route. It generates consistent traffic and nurtures customer engagement over time and without the costs of paid methods.

Let's delve into the world of organic marketing, revealing the top 10 ways to leverage organic campaigns for promoting your shop.

LET'S KICK THINGS OFF!

What is organic marketing?

Organic marketing revolves around crafting a strategic approach that continually drives valuable traffic to your business without solely relying on paid methods or no methods at all. Nearly half of all marketers say that organic search has the best ROI.

It's about having real conversations and sharing genuinely helpful content and information. You're not just saying, "Buy this" or "Choose our business,"—you're showing why doing so would be a great investment through engaging stories and helpful information.

Rather than relying on immediate paid visibility, an organic marketing strategy focuses on creating a lasting impact, gradually establishing your brand as a trusted authority in your industry.

Unlike paid advertising that goes away if you stop funding it, organic marketing



Organic marketing can generate consistent traffic and nurture customer engagement without the costs of paid methods.

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Prioritize a website design that's user-friendly, visually appealing and rich in content.

drives visibility and awareness for the long term.

Here are 10 useful ways to leverage the power of organic marketing:

1 DEFINE YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

When you're in the automotive aftermarket and want to attract new customers, it's essential to know exactly who you're trying to reach. Your ideal customers are those who have a passion for cars and want to enhance their vehicle's appearance, performance or utility.

These could be car enthusiasts who love to personalize their rides, collectors seeking to restore classic cars to their former glory, overlanders or motorsports competitors. By recognizing their preferences and challenges, you can tailor your marketing strategies to resonate with them more effectively.

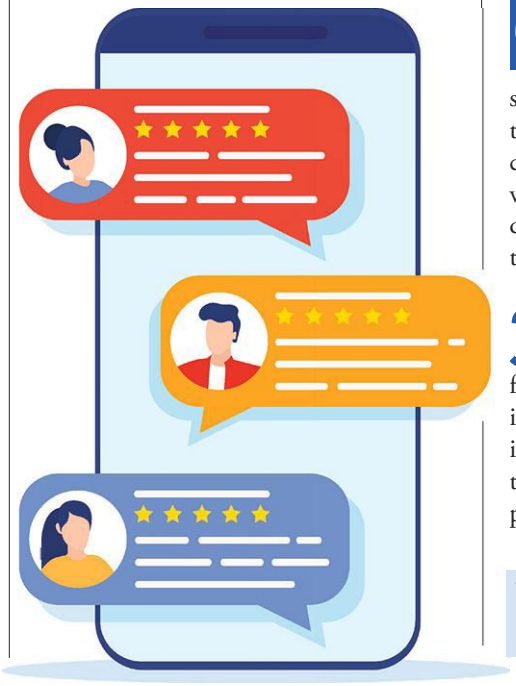
PRO TIP: A comprehensive understanding of your target audience will ensure your marketing efforts hit the mark, fostering genuine engagement and sustained loyalty.

2 DEVELOP A QUALITY WEBSITE THAT CONVERTS

A standout website is crucial when promoting your shop and boosting organic traffic. This online platform serves as your virtual showroom or online store and the first impression for potential customers.

Here's how to make your website shine:

- *Make it engaging & mobile-friendly.* Design a website that captures attention and works seamlessly across all devices, including smartphones and tablets. Users form an opinion about a website in just 0.05 seconds.
- *Design & layout matter.* Attractive design and images showcase your brand's personality. Research shows 40% of users won't engage with a website if its layout is unattractive.
- *Create a cohesive visual identity.* Use a distinctive logo that's easy to recognize and remember. Choose a harmonious color scheme that resonates.



- *Showcase your work and/or products.* Use high-quality images and videos to display your best work, including before-and-after photos.
- *Provide easy navigation.* Use easy-to-navigate menus and clear calls to action to guide visitors to the information they seek. Research shows website visitors spend an average of 6.44 seconds focused on the main navigation menu.
- *Include customer testimonials.* Share the positive experiences of past clients through testimonials.

PRO TIP: When crafting your website, remember that it often shapes customers' first impressions of your business. Prioritize a design that's user-friendly, visually appealing and content-rich to create a positive impact on visitors. We highly recommend that if you don't have an in-house graphics person that you hire a professional photographer.

3 PRIORITIZE CONTENT MARKETING

Content marketing is a powerful tool for connecting with your audience and is a great way to help your site show up in searches. Google loves quality content that's informative and helps clients and prospects.

Here's how to effectively engage your

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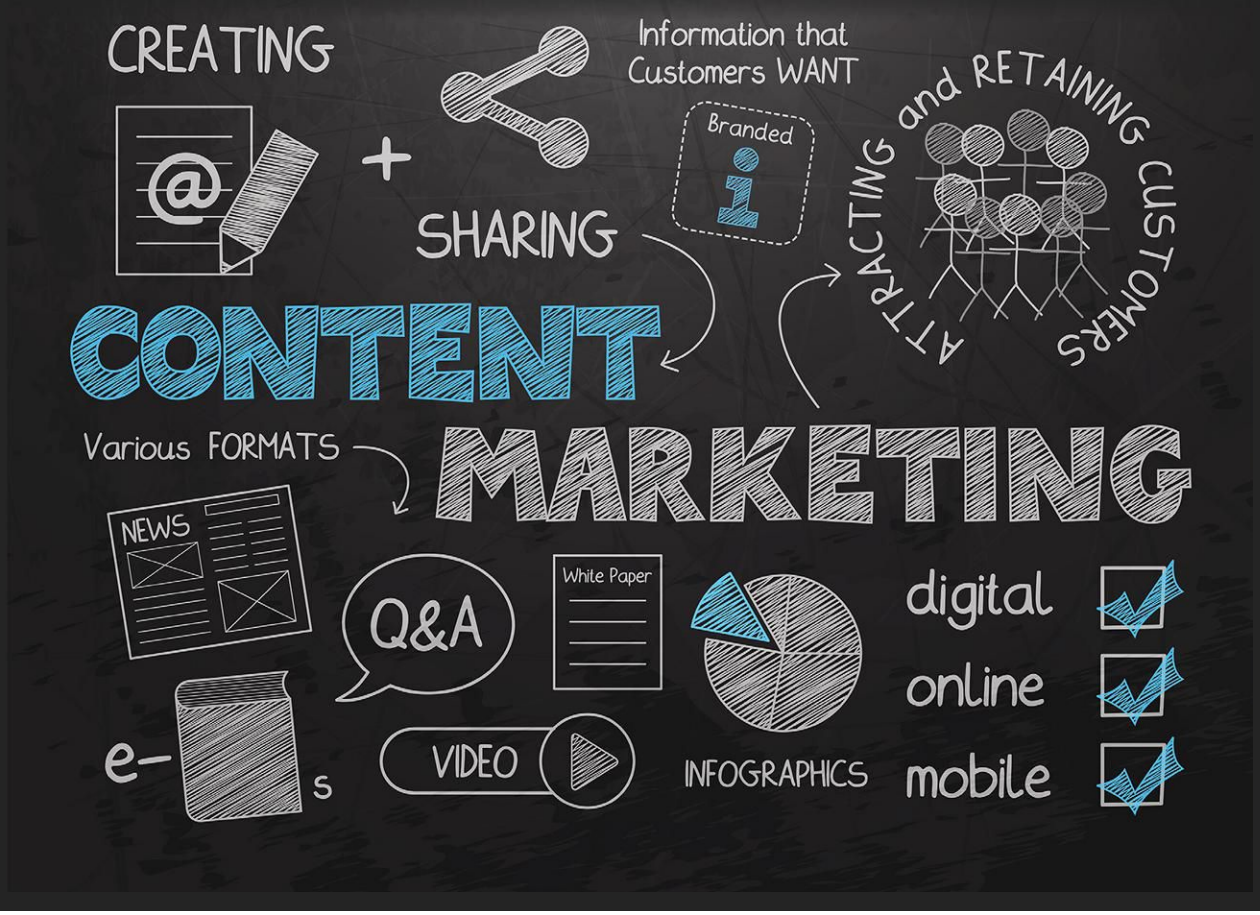


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audience through educational or entertaining content:

- ***Helpful blog posts.*** Share articles and guides about restoration, tuning or restyling on your website. Brands with a dedicated blog enjoy 55% more traffic than those that don't.
- ***How-to guides.*** Empower enthusiasts with step-by-step guides for DIY tasks.
- ***Behind the scenes.*** Showcase transformations and stories of expertise.
- ***Visual social media platforms.*** Use Instagram and Facebook to write about and share photos of projects.
- ***Informative articles.*** Address common questions and concerns with written responses.

PRO TIP: By providing valuable insights via organic content, you'll engage with your audience and establish your shop as a reliable expert, helping increase your website's search ranking in the process.

4 FOCUS ON SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO)

By prioritizing search engine optimization, you'll amplify your shop's online presence. Currently, organic traffic is responsible for 53% of traffic to all websites.

Pay attention to these critical aspects:

- ***Keyword optimization.*** Sprinkle your website and content with relevant keywords that relate to your business. Use keyword phrases that your clients are using in their searches to boost your rankings in search engines. If Google doesn't know that you offer certain products or services, then you will not show up in search results when your prospects are looking for the things you carry.
- ***Local SEO.*** Implement local SEO strategies to attract nearby customers in your targeted geographic area. Some examples include claiming and verifying your Google Business Profile listing, creating blog posts, articles or landing pages that

Google loves quality content that's informative and helps clients and prospects.




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focus on local topics or events, and listing your business in local directories relevant to your industry.

- *Social media.*
  When posting to social media, make sure to include important keyword phrases in your post copy and ALT tags, as social media posts, especially LinkedIn, will show up in search results.

PRO TIP: Using the right keywords and optimizing for your local area can greatly increase how many people find your shop online. This helps you connect with customers exactly when they're looking for what you offer.

5 USE SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Social media channels are pivotal in modern marketing strategies, providing businesses with dynamic platforms to connect with their target audience.

Follow these useful tips to get the most out of social media marketing:

- *Choose the right platforms.*
  Pick social media platforms that match your industry and audience.
- *Have a content strategy.*
  Create diverse content that resonates with your audience's interests.
- *Post consistently.*
  Post regularly to help maintain your online presence.
- *Engage & interact.*
  Respond promptly to comments, messages and mentions.
- *Include striking visuals.*
  Invest in high-quality visual content like images and videos that align with your brand identity.
- *Insert hashtags & trends.*
  Use relevant hashtags and trends to expand your reach beyond current followers.
- *Develop influencer collaborations.*
  Partner with industry influencers to reach a wider audience and enhance your brand's credibility.
- *Optimize your profiles.*
  Make sure that all of your social media channel profiles are aligned with your business and that they all correctly match your brand and messaging.

Don't forget about LinkedIn. If you don't have a LinkedIn business page and your projects and products are targeted at higher-income markets, get one started today. Here are some stats that will convince you to get your business on LinkedIn:

- 10 million executives and 37% of U.S. adults use LinkedIn
- More than 50% of LinkedIn users earn $75,000 or more per year
- 4-out-of-5 people on LinkedIn "drive business decisions"
- 45% of content readers on LinkedIn have "upper management" occupations
- 40% of marketers indicate LinkedIn as the most effective channel for driving high-quality leads

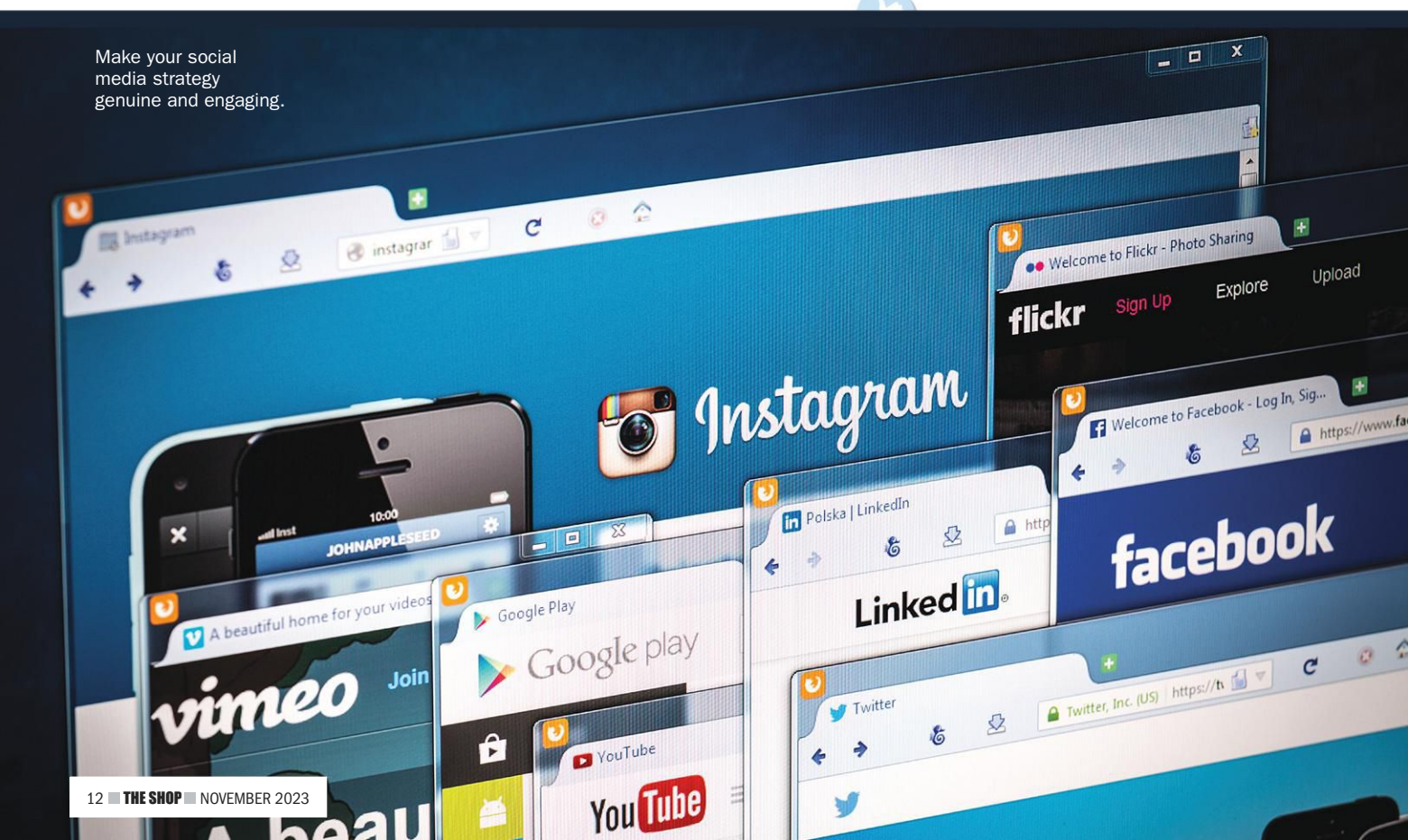
PRO TIP: Make your social media strategy genuine and engaging, crafting a compelling narrative that builds a strong community around your brand.

6 IMPLEMENT EMAIL MARKETING

Email marketing is a powerful tool that puts you in direct conversation with individuals who are genuinely interested in your products or services. Research shows 46% of customers prefer to be contacted by brands via email.

By personalizing your messages, you can communicate effectively and establish long-lasting connections with your current and future customers.

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Make your social media strategy genuine and engaging.

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marketing aligns seamlessly with other marketing strategies, amplifying their impact. According to Demandsage.com, for every $1 spent on it, email marketing generates $36 in sales.

Integrating email with social media posts, content marketing and more creates a unified brand presence that reaches your audience across various touchpoints.

Add an email newsletter sign-up form to your website. Even if you're not ready to start email marketing to your clients and prospects now, you can start building that list.

If you're already using email marketing, don't forget to review your stats. Look at your open, click and unsubscribe rates to see what works and what doesn't. Don't be afraid to adjust your content, subject lines, or the day and time you send emails. Mondays have the highest open rates at 22%, while Sundays have the lowest at 20.3%.

PRO TIP: Maximize the impact of your email campaigns by using automated email personalization to deliver the perfect message to the right person at the ideal time.

7 SHOWCASE CUSTOMER REVIEWS & TESTIMONIALS

Harness the impact of customer reviews and testimonials.

These authentic endorsements create a compelling narrative of client satisfaction that resonates deeply with your current patrons and future buyers.

Testimonials serve as powerful endorsements, turning happy customers into advocates. They offer tangible proof of your shop's ability to deliver quality services and products while fostering trust within the automotive community.

PRO TIP: Visual testimonials provide a dynamic and relatable way to showcase customer satisfaction. By sharing images or videos of real customers with their finished vehicles, you create a stronger emotional connection with your audience.

8 COLLABORATE & NETWORK

Broaden your horizons by establishing collaborations and networking within the aftermarket through these means:

- *Strategic partnerships.* Team up with related businesses for mutual growth.
- *Sponsorships.* Sponsoring grassroots race teams or events is a great way to gain visibility for your brand and business.
- *Industry events.* Attend or display your products and work at local and national shows like the SEMA Show, Goodguys shows, Overland Expo and related gatherings to connect with potential clients.
- *Networking.* Build relationships, gain insights and share expertise with peers, local business owners, club members and others.
- *Volunteering.* Giving your time is a great way to meet like-minded business owners and gain new connections and clients.
- *Online communities.* Virtually engage in discussions, fan groups or other forums that make sense for your shop.
- *Thought leadership.* Showcase your expertise to enhance credibility and attract clients.

PRO TIP: Exploring collaborations beyond your industry can open new avenues for growth. Consider partnering with businesses that align

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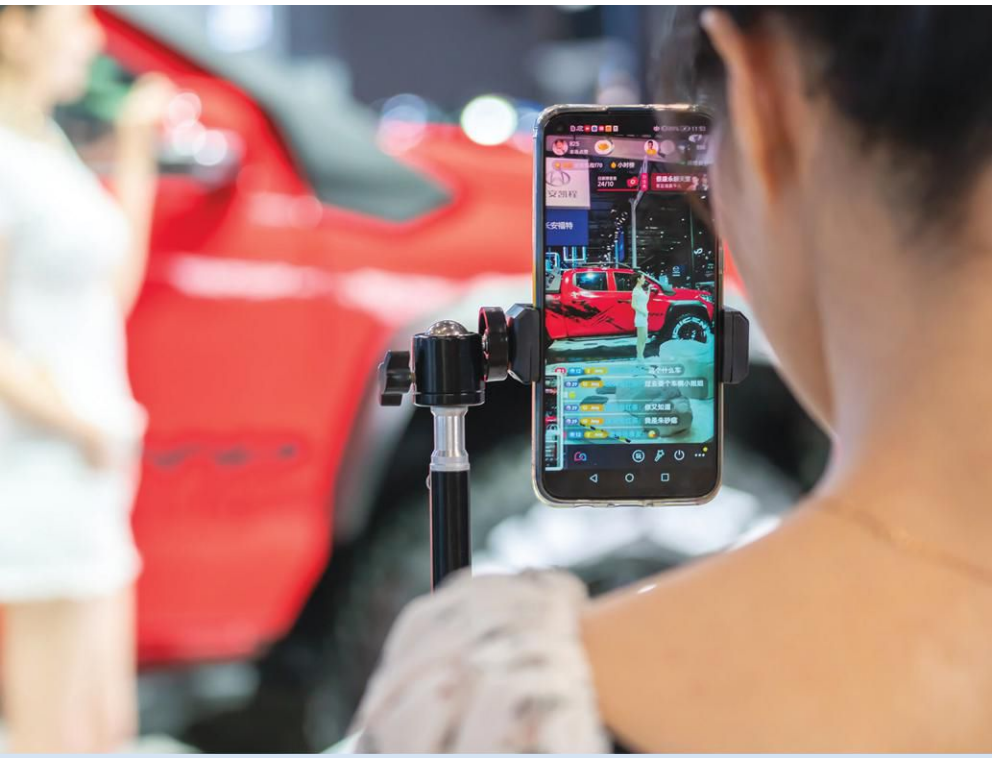
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A comprehensive understanding of your target audience ensures your marketing efforts will hit the mark.

with your values and offer complementary services, allowing you to tap into fresh markets and expand your reach.

9 INFLUENCER RELATIONSHIPS

Leverage influencer partnerships to increase awareness and amplify your brand's impact as part of your marketing efforts. Influencer marketing has an ROI of 650%, as marketers receive on average $6.5 for every $1 invested.

Collaborate with key figures who share your audience to tap into their engaged followers, expanding your reach and enhancing your credibility.

Their authentic endorsements add a trusted layer to your brand, resonating with their dedicated followers and fostering a meaningful connection that drives interest and conversions.

PRO TIP: When collaborating with influencers, ensure you're choosing those whose followers share a genuine interest in your products and services, and whose values align with yours.

10 MONITOR YOUR PROGRESS

The data matters. It's important to stay in the loop about the effectiveness of your organic marketing efforts.

Take advantage of tools that help you keep tabs on essential details, like how many people are checking out your website, how people are reacting on social media and how your email campaigns are performing.

Make sure you have these key tools set up and monitored:

- Google Analytics
- Google Search Console
- Social media insights
- Other stats available to you

PRO TIP: Regularly tracking progress lets you identify what's working and what needs tweaking. By analyzing the data, you gain insights that guide your future actions and enable you to fine-tune your approach for better results.

KEY TAKEAWAY

In the competitive automotive aftermarket industry, effective marketing is your foundation for success. It's not just about showcasing products; it's about building connections that fuel growth, loyalty and industry recognition.

Organic marketing takes center stage in propelling your business to new heights by impressing existing and future customers. Unlike traditional marketing methods, it offers a smoother, cost-effective route that nurtures ongoing traffic and customer engagement.

Each step plays a vital role in your journey, from understanding your audience and creating an engaging website to employing content marketing, SEO and social media strategies. ***TS***



BARRY ALT *and his team at Motorhead Digital have more than 26 years of experience in digital marketing and website development. They offer their DONE-FOR-YOU Location, Site and Marketing Maximizer programs to supercharge your website, social media and online presence to attract better, higher-value leads to your shop.*

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Restyling AFTERMARKET ACCESSORIES

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A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING

By Jef White

Cargo management solutions bring order to the chaos.

They slip and slide with every bump and turn—boxes, bags, tools, equipment and more, all carelessly thrown into the truck bed or backseat. But what if we could bring order to that chaos?

Aftermarket cargo management systems offer a place for everything and put everything in its place. From sturdy toolboxes to hideaway storage solutions, you can help customers efficiently pack and transport just about anything to take just about anywhere.

Every driver is a potential client, and with easy installations and durable construction the items practically sell themselves, even as last-minute add-on purchases.

Suppliers are happy to share advice and instructions on how to offer these attractive devices. Showroom displays and shop



Products that fit the natural character of the vehicle are popular with drivers. (Photo courtesy Husky Liners/RealTruck)

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Pro Series Toolbox Line
■ **FEATURES & BENEFITS:** Pre-configured and loaded with master tool sets; range from 26 to 72 inches in lower and/or top boxes and are optioned with EVA foam tool sets; customization and color options available; a secure place for every tool.

Boxo USA
Trent Burbidge
Sales Director

■ **HOT PRODUCT:**
Humpstor
■ **FEATURES & BENEFITS:** Provides useful in-bed storage without taking away valuable floor space; can be used under tonneaus and toppers; three-point locking system; easy to install and remove; includes dividers/gun rack; rubber seal under the lid blocks moisture and dust.

DU-HA Inc.
Tim Litt
Sales & Marketing Manager

■ **HOT PRODUCT:**
The AeroBox
■ **FEATURES & BENEFITS:** Extremely durable cargo box that docks into the truck bed at the tailgate; provides access to anything from gear to groceries without climbing into the bed; can be removed in seconds and rolled into a garage or to a jobsite.

Ecological LLC
Grant Evans
VP of Sales & Marketing

■ **HOT PRODUCT:**
Husky Liners Gearbox
■ **FEATURES & BENEFITS:** An in-the-cab storage solution; made in the USA of a textured, non-skid ABS plastic material; looks like it was made for the vehicle by contouring to the front edges of the rear seat; removable foam inserts accommodate cargo of all sizes; easy installation.

RealTruck
Joey Scelza
Regional Sales Manager
Accessories Division
Mid Central/Great Lakes Region



Today's easy-fitting options make the products even more attractive. (Photo courtesy Husky Liners/RealTruck)



Efficient storage solutions are important to vehicle owners. (Photo courtesy DU-HA Inc.)



Drivers are usually interested once they know what's available. (Photo courtesy DU-HA Inc.)

vehicle examples are particularly effective, as drivers get the chance to see and feel the useful benefits they're missing.

Now's a great time for your customers to get organized and enjoy all these systems have to offer.

LOCK IT DOWN

If you've been slow to offer cargo carrying solutions, now is the time to start.

"Over the past decade, the toolbox/cargo management product market has witnessed

continued on page 24

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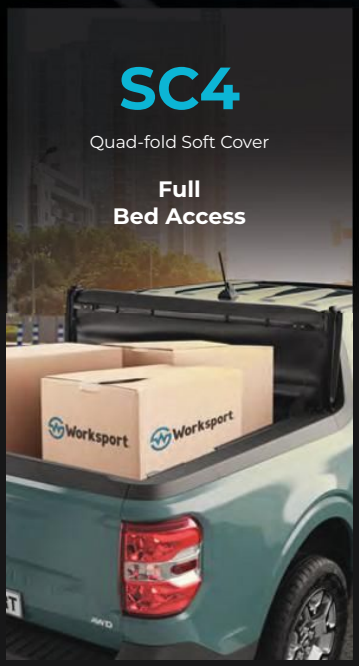
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Ram TRX production will conclude at the end of the year with the 2024 Ram 1500 TRX 6.2L Supercharged V-8 – Final Edition.

LAST CALL: 2024 RAM TRX

Ram is positioning its 2024 Ram 1500 TRX 6.2L Supercharged V-8 – Final Edition as a proper send-off for its popular performance offering, as Ram TRX production will conclude at the end of the year.

"The Ram TRX cemented Ram Truck as North America's off-road truck leader when it debuted in 2020 as a 2021 model, setting new benchmarks for power and performance among half-ton pickup trucks with the 6.2L supercharged Hemi V-8 engine," the company states.

The latest model is rated at 702 hp and 650 pound-feet of torque with the 6.2L supercharged Hemi powering the Ram TRX to a top speed of 118 mph. Combined with a high torque-capacity TorqueFlite 8-speed automatic transmission, it launches from 0-60 mph in 4.5 seconds, and clocks a quarter-mile time of 12.9 seconds at 108 mph.

"The introduction of the Ram 1500 TRX ushered in a significant shift in off-road performance trucks with a halo effect that will last for years to come," says Tim Kuniskis, Ram brand CEO – Stellantis. "This current chapter in Ram's high-performance trucks is coming to a close, but it's not the end of TRX's story. While we'll have more news to come at a later date, we're proud to offer our loyal performance enthusiasts the very special TRX 6.2L Supercharged V8 – Final Edition."

Available in eight exterior colors, the Final Edition features a combination of technology, graphics, performance and exterior appearance upgrades. Exclusive content includes Satin Titanium bead-lock-capable wheels with a matching 6.2L hood badge and bed decal.

The interior offers patina stitching on the dashboard and seats and an embroidered TRX seat back logo, 4x4 weave matte carbon fiber on the instrument panel, doors, console and steering wheel, plus a TRX 6.2L Supercharged V8 – Final Edition cluster splash screen, ultra-premium center console badge showcasing the build number, passenger-side TRX dashboard badge in Satin Titanium finish and Triaxle suede door panel insert.

Additional standard equipment includes a 19-speaker Harman Kardon premium sound system, heads-up display, digital rearview mirror and eight-way power driver and passenger seats. Safety features include adaptive cruise control, Lane Keep Assist, pedestrian emergency braking blind spot and cross-path detection, and ParkSense front and rear park assist with stop.

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A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING



Search for unique cargo management options your customers will appreciate. (Photos courtesy Ecological)



Whatever cargo option you offer, it needs to be secure. (Photo courtesy Ecological)

a substantial transformation. Notably, there has been a profound realization of the importance of efficient storage solutions for vehicle owners," says Tim Litt, sales and marketing manager for DU-HA Inc. "This realization has prompted both vehicle manufacturers and aftermarket producers to prioritize offering a diverse array of storage options."

Utility and capacity may be the first things customers consider when choosing a cargo management system. But don't forget to highlight products that help keep their belongings safe as well.

"Security has become a huge component," says Grant Evans, VP of sales and marketing for Ecological. "Since cargo boxes have become so ubiquitous, they are natural targets. Whatever cargo option you have, it needs to be secure."

Products with an appearance that fits the natural character of the vehicle are also popular, says Joey Scelza, regional sales manager – accessories division – Mid Central/Great Lakes Region for RealTruck.

"Cargo management products in the truck market that look and feel like original equipment have been hard to come by over the years. Companies are starting to use this opportunity to create products that cater to not only the 'everyday, blue-collar man,' but also the 'truck mom' and every person in between," he says. "Innovation can prove difficult with limited space in the cab of a truck. However, we found a great way to accommodate more capacity in that area."

Proper systems ensure drivers have all they need, when they need it.

"While the industry expands with new vehicles, machines, etc., there are different tools required to work on them," says Trent Burbidge, sales director for Boxo USA. "Not to mention higher expectations for the form, fit and function of the toolbox. With all of that considered, we improve toolbox designs, increase our tool catalog and provide our complete solutions based on doing our best to provide a product that not just meets, but exceeds market expectations."

A WIDE CUSTOMER BASE

If you're not suggesting toolboxes or related carrying solutions to every pickup owner who contacts your shop, you may be missing out.

"If you have a truck, most of the time you are just hauling air. A cargo management option is a must for every customer who owns a truck," says Evans. "From what I have seen, it's rare that shops sell cargo management products as essentials to everyone who owns a truck. Shops should sell cargo boxes the way Verizon stores sell phone cases—they are essentials. If you have a truck, you need a cargo management option."

Drivers are usually interested once they know what's available, Litt observes.

"A common oversight among retailers selling cargo management products is the potential failure to adequately demonstrate the products' benefits and the value they bring in terms of organized storage," he



Customers need tools on the trail and at the worksite. (Photo courtesy boxousa.com)



Every driver is a potential client.



Aftermarket cargo management systems offer a place for everything and put everything in its place.

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says. "Many retail establishments might not invest sufficient effort in showcasing these products, thereby missing out on a chance to truly engage their customers."

Today's easy-fitting options make the products even more attractive, says Scelza.

"One mistake I have seen is not taking advantage of stocking a few grab-and-go items that don't require much installation or that can be installed while having the vehicle in the bay of the shop," he says. "Having products to sell in the showroom while the customer waits will generate more sales and more awareness of a brand or product category that may not have been as widely known as others."

Matching the offering to the project's specific requirements lends an air of quality and compatibility, says Burbidge.

"It's important to keep your customer's application in mind," he advises. "Understanding the direct need allows a direct solution to be created. There are too many times when the 'kitchen sink' gets thrown into a product or cargo management system and that results in something being over-accessorized or even overpriced."

CLOSING THE LID

Demonstrating their versatility with a few displays will help highlight the utility and attractiveness of today's cargo management systems.

"For something as simple as our Gearbox with not many vehicle-specific SKUs, we always encourage our brick-and-mortar partners to keep a few on hand to show customers," says Scelza from RealTruck. "Take them out to the customer's vehicle and show them what they are missing by not having something to increase organization and space within the cab of a truck. Also, get products to show in your own vehicle or shop truck. Customers don't know what

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TRAIL RIDE CELEBRATES 70-YEAR PARTNERSHIP

The Jeep brand and Jeep Jamboree celebrated 70 years of extreme off-roading this year with a party on the trail.

Since 1953, the Rubicon Trail, known as one of the most difficult off-road trails in the world, has been a lifestyle symbol of off-road adventuring for the Jeep community, brand officials note.



The Jeep brand and Jeep Jamboree celebrated 70 years of extreme off-roading this year with a party on the Rubicon Trail.

"For more than 80 years, the Jeep community has defined the Jeep brand and, for 70 of those years, the Rubicon Trail has been heralded by the community as one of the toughest off-road trails in the world, which combined with its beauty has put the Rubicon Trail on every Jeep 4x4 customer's bucket list," says Jim Morrison, senior vice president and head of Jeep brand North America. "Conquering the Rubicon Trail is tangible proof that these Jeep vehicles can literally go anywhere and do anything."

This past summer, 450 Jeep enthusiasts and their families and friends—driving a total of 125 Jeep Wranglers and Gladiators—marked the occasion with a special event on the Rubicon Trail's seven-decade anniversary by living the off-road adventure of their dreams and, in the process, proving that their Jeep vehicles could manage the trail and get them back home. Located in northern California near Lake Tahoe in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, the Rubicon Trail spans approximately 22 miles of off-road terrain.

Jeep Jamboree covers 17.5 miles of the Trail's most challenging terrain.

"In 1953, when Mark Smith organized the first Jeep Jamboree with 55 Willys and voyaged across the Sierra Nevada Mountains by way of the Rubicon Trail, off-road recreation was born," says Pearse Umlauf, president and CEO of Jeep Jamboree. "The following year, Willys Motors—then manufacturer of Jeep vehicles—became involved with the adventure, and Jeep Jamborees have been an off-road tradition ever since and continue to grow."

Recently, the hobby has seen a surge of interest, especially after the COVID pandemic, with a tremendous demand from people who want to experience their Jeep vehicles in open-air freedom, he adds.

Meanwhile, company engineers have long used the Rubicon Trail to develop and test Jeep's newest trucks and SUVs, including the Jeep Wrangler.



With easy installs and durable construction, the items practically sell themselves.

they don't know, and they will always look to experienced sales personnel for guidance in their purchases."

Showroom displays and working examples drive home the benefits, agrees DU-HA's Litt.

"There's a great opportunity for retailers to capitalize on manufacturer display programs, providing customers with hands-on experiences that allow them to see, touch and appreciate the product's features," he says. "Leveraging programs like our 'Free DU-HA Underseat Display' and the 'Buy one Humpstor and get a free Humpstor' display not only add an appealing incentive for customers, but also serve as dynamic visual tools."

The showroom displays enable customers to interact with the products directly, fostering a deeper understanding of their utility and encouraging them to make more informed purchasing decisions, Litt explains.

Meanwhile, it sometimes helps to explain products to customers by comparing them to something they already understand.

"The AeroBox, in particular, can cater to people who want something like a trunk for their truck, which is maybe an idea that a customer was not aware was available," says Ecological's Evans. "Regardless of your customer's needs, there is a unique cargo storage option available from innovative companies in the market."

Taking the time to build a useful system will benefit the shop and the customer, says Burbidge from Boxo USA.

"Create a product or system that you are proud of and can stand behind. Once you have a solid product, all that is needed is education and brand awareness. The sales will follow from there." ***TS***

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WELCOME HOME

Open houses & related gatherings help build a family atmosphere.

Story & Photos by Jason R. Sakurai



Food and festivities inside Outside Van's new facility.

Open house, grand opening, launch, debut, introduction, festivity, ceremony or celebration—the ability to draw attention to your shop is more important today than ever. Why? Because there is so much more competition locally, regionally and nationally, attempting to reach your customers and steal your sales.

Look at the lengths to which these challengers will go to get in front of your audience. They often employ influencers and utilize social media to appear more informed about the latest products and trends. You may have the same knowledge and experience, but their ability to spread the word farther, wider and faster makes them appear to be the authority.



Adventure vans were displayed at Outside Van's open house.

Without their resources and staffing, how can you possibly compete and win?

The answer is to be a better promoter than they can possibly be in your area, in the community and among your devotees. Your advantage is the knowledge and insight you have, and your ability to leverage this to your benefit.

Hosting one of the gatherings mentioned above offers a chance to share your know-how and experience with local businesses and enthusiasts. But it takes some effort.

When you decide to host an event, realize that even if you've announced your date well in advance, it may still end up conflicting with some other show or community event.


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A bright, brand-new shop welcomes visitors to Toms Offroad. (Photos courtesy Toms Offroad)



First- and sixth-gen Broncos side by side outside Toms.



The exterior of Toms Offroad's new storefront (Photos courtesy Toms Offroad).



The Toms event included prizes and merchandise.

Specialization and intelligence will win the day. While you may not get the numbers of spectators and attendees you initially hoped for, what you will get are more inspired and engaged participants who know your store and the products you carry.

HOST WITH THE MOST

Live events have worked well for retailers in and around Portland, Oregon, where there are members of PDX Overlanders, a group that can easily number in the hundreds if not thousands on a given day.

Flyers, email blasts, social media and word of mouth all combine to attract a crowd to auto-relayed gatherings in this area.

What's necessary is to start spreading the news as soon as you've decided on a date for your event, to be consistent with the messaging as to what's taking place, and to be determined to reach as many enthusiasts as you can in the time you have before your event.

Recently, attending three very different openings in less than a month provided me with a chance to not only compare them, but to also take note of their distinctions. Here, I'll share my observations in hopes of helping your next event be a success.

First was Outside Van's grand opening of its adventure van assembly line and headquarters, located in Portland. Next up was a visit to Medford, Oregon's Toms Offroad, a Bronco specialist with an impressive new showroom and warehouse. The final stop was at GEN-Y Hitch's unveiling of a state-of-the art manufacturing facility and center of operations in Nappanee, Indiana.

All three companies did an outstanding job of introducing their establishments to their guests and visitors while imparting a sense of community to everyone who attended.

1 OUTSIDE VAN

With an Adventure Van Expo event scheduled to take place two days later and about an hour away in Hood River, Oregon, Outside Van took advantage of its proximity to conduct a grand opening celebration at its new production van assembly line and headquarters building.

Rather than limiting participation, the company invited suppliers, the media and other van builders. The result was a party-like atmosphere complete with plenty of food and refreshments, a DJ and lots of giveaways.

Casual and informative, it was a great way for locals and Expo attendees to get to know more about Outside Van.

Being an Adventure Van Expo supporter, Outside Van (outsidevan.com) was able to piggyback on the email blasts the event promoter sent out to attendees, sponsors, vendors and the media. It also utilized social media and let its suppliers know about the open house well in advance.

Participation from other companies helped immensely. Dometic, BFGoodrich, JL Audio, Backwoods Adventure Mods, Flarespace, Garmin, Lithionics Battery, Breadwinner Cycles and Rigid were among

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GEN-Y headquarters' open concept fosters communication and transparency.



An air-conditioned production area is a towing industry rarity, along with vacuums to pick up metal shavings.



Dan Miller, left, GEN-Y president, with Chuck Lenhart of R&R Marketing and Rich Butler on the riverboat.

the suppliers with displays at Outside Van's open house.

2 TOMS OFFROAD

Toms Offroad took a different approach when the time came to dedicate its new storefront and warehouse. It started two days earlier with trail rides and followed it with a Saturday show and shine highlighting its signature Bronco connection at a nearby park.

Separating the Bronco show from sales at the store made the event at the end of the week more of a family affair. Toms did not disappoint, with plenty of ice-cold water, a misting tent, a great food truck, beer garden and huge area in which to sit, visit and enjoy live music.

Some of Toms' vendors such as Painless Performance Products, Red Line Oil, Rock Slide Engineering and PSC Performance Steering Components joined the shop's staff in answering questions and receiving product feedback.

Holding its Bronco show on the weekend following the unveiling of the new store gave attendees a reason to stay in Medford for a few days—some traveling for as long as a week to and from the location. It separated the business from the fun and camaraderie of Bronco ownership, so there was no pressure whatsoever to purchase parts and accessories.

Most patrons visited the new store and bought what they needed before going on one or both of the trail rides, or participating in or attending the Saturday Bronco show.

While unseasonably warm weather may have discouraged some, it did little to dampen the spirits of those who showed up. Most customers came early and stayed for the duration.

There's something about listening to live music all day long that makes for a livelier gathering—a plus you may want to consider when holding your own event.

One other detail was event-specific apparel. T-shirts with an array of different designs were offered for sale, and most guests purchased more than one. It's a tribute to Toms' marketing department and group of talented designers—it's great when you have a creative team in-house.

3 GEN-Y HITCH

GEN-Y Hitch rolled out the red carpet for visitors, suppliers and city officials, kicking things off with a full breakfast, followed by tours of its modern production facility and headquarters building.

Utilizing a ventilation system that filters particulates out of the air coupled with a unique vacuum that collects metal shavings from each machine and workstation, the comfort and safety of everyone in the GEN-Y production area is a top priority. Plus, air conditioning—something of a rarity in many production settings throughout Elkhart County—cools the entire structure.

A luncheon at GEN-Y preceded a golf tournament, followed in the evening with a riverboat cruise featuring a catered dinner and drinks.

Among the manufacturers, suppliers and distributors participating in the daylong festivities were U-Haul, BOLT Locks, Turn 14 Distribution, AllPro Distributing, Meyer Distributing, R&R Marketing and a gaggle of city, county and Indiana state officials.

The purpose was to introduce GEN-Y to an audience that may have been familiar with its products, but not necessarily the company itself.

By opening its new building to visitors, it became apparent that the company is more than the sum of the materials and machinery used to manufacture its hitch and towing products, or the structure where it all comes together.

The people making it happen in a made-in-the-USA setting truly resonated.

TAKEAWAYS

As diverse as these three events were, they all centered on reaching core supporters, whether they were retail consumers, suppliers, government officials, distributors or rep groups.

Their approaches may have differed, but not the results.

Budgets for the events varied, although it's important to keep in mind that each had slightly different objectives.

Regardless, there were at least three important takeaways you can consider prior to hosting your own event, whatever the occasion:

1. *Planning is essential*. Do as much in advance as you can.
2. *Involve your entire staff*. Collecting ideas and insights will help improve your outcome.
3. *Know your audience*. Look for ways to get them involved and ensure they find it worthwhile. ***TS***



JASON SAKURAI *heads up Roadhouse Marketing, a marketing, advertising and sales solutions firm dedicated to the automotive aftermarket. A frequent contributor to THE SHOP, Jason's byline appears in many enthusiast and trade publications, in print and online.*



PRODUCTS OR PROCESSES?





Do what makes the SEMA Show a worthwhile trip for you. **By Josh Poulson**

I don't remember the exact year of my first SEMA Show, but I know it was more than 25 years ago.

In fact, it was long enough ago that when I ate breakfast at the casino that morning, the steak and eggs were only $4 (of course the freshly squeezed orange juice was also $4). Obviously, Las Vegas, and the show itself, have both changed a lot since then.

Why do you go to the SEMA Show? For me, the answer has changed over the years and will probably continue to change as time goes on.

For many years, my primary—and really only—reason for attending was to find and look at the new products that were being displayed for the first time. I was excited to see all that was introduced and imagine how I could work it into my business.

As time went on, however, manufacturers stopped waiting for the show to release or display new products—instead, they revealed them through email and now through social media. Yes, you will still find some new products each year in Vegas, but not to the degree there used to be.

Still, if you need more intimate details or have questions, the SEMA Show is a great place to grab the undivided attention of manufacturers to get help or support and strengthen those supplier relationships.

BUSINESS IDEAS

So, what do I look forward to these days? For me, now it is more about what I would categorize as "processes," which include business services, networking with peers



The idea behind this recent Lincoln Navigator package was sparked by a project vehicle I saw at last year's SEMA Show. Finding inspiration is a big reason why I head out to Las Vegas every year.

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PRODUCTS OR PROCESSES?

SEMA SHOW NEW PRODUCTS SHOWCASE MOVES TO NORTH HALL

The 2023 SEMA Show New Products Showcase, called the world's largest display of new automotive aftermarket products, is relocating to the North Hall of the Las Vegas Convention Center.

Accessible exclusively to showgoers during the Oct. 31-Nov. 3 trade show, the showcase is a top buyer and media destination and serves as a one-stop shop to easily discover thousands of recent product debuts, organizers say.

"The New Products Showcase is the most comprehensive collection of what is coming next in the automotive industry, providing attendees a virtual glimpse into the future of the market," says Tom Gattuso, SEMA vice president of events. "It is where SEMA Show attendees can also envision how to utilize the latest products and services in their own businesses by learning details about the products, including the exhibitor's booth number, so they connect directly with the manufacturer on the show floor. Exhibitors can maximize their ROI by participating in the New Products Showcase, which results in increased brand exposure and more visitors to their booths."



The SEMA Show New Products Showcase is moving to the North Hall for this year's event, set for Oct. 31-Nov. 3.



Seeing new approaches to traditional products can lead to innovative solutions.

or just overall ways to help my business besides adding new products.

It is the one time of year that I can join with fellow shop owners who face the same challenges I do and discuss what is working for them. Shows can prompt a great interchange of ideas to help take your business in a new direction or help perfect what you are already doing well.

Two examples of this are things I learned at last year's SEMA Show.

First, my business had been doing some window tint and paint protection film, along with some smaller, partial-wrap blackout packages, but never complete cars. When I arrived at the SEMA show last year, I immediately went to the SEMA Professional Restylers Organization (PRO) booth in the West Hall, where the PRO Cup Challenge was being held.

This is a yearly competition where restylers from around the country enter a vehicle with an accessory package that can cost no more than $12,500 wholesale and require no more than 40 hours of labor and is aimed directly at car dealership customers. The competition is centered on packages that are creative, reproduceable and profitable.

Last year there were seven vehicles entered that looked really good. One that caught my eye immediately was a 2023 Cadillac Escalade that had been lowered and fitted with larger wheels, and then wrapped in a full matte clear PPF.

The package was finished off with some Gucci seatbelts and was a real showstopper. Props to Auto Trim Restyling of St. Louis—Kevin McGowan and his team knocked this package out of the park!

Even though this vehicle didn't end up winning an award, it won my heart. I took some pictures and eventually went back home to a Cadillac dealer client that hadn't been doing a lot of business with me recently. They really liked the package but had no inventory, and every Escalade coming in was already sold.

I didn't give up. Undeterred, I then visited my local Lincoln dealer and sold them on the package concept. Even though we didn't lower the vehicle or add 24-inch wheels, we did powder-coat the wheels, tint the windows and then install matte clear PPF on the entire vehicle.

The first one we did sold in 24 hours, and we have since redone eight more Navigators for them in the past five months, along with many other smaller jobs.

This made my visit to the SEMA Show a success. It wasn't necessarily a new product I found, but a new appraoch to an exciting product with a different perspective.

BEHIND THE SCENES

My second example is the software I now

use in my business. As a bit of a technology guy, for years I have been frustrated with how far behind our industry is when it comes to finding good software to run our day-to-day operations.

Yes, QuickBooks or Zoho Books do a good job for inventory or accounting, but most auto business software is aimed at service or mechanic shops or body shops. The restyling and accessory business is different enough that it felt like I was just shoehorning my business into those software programs.

I then discovered Restyler Connect software that exactly fit what I felt my shop needed. I now have the latest technology to help with my day-to-day business, and it solved many pain points that I had in running a restyling shop that serves both car dealers and retail clients.

To date I have been able to save many man-hours every week and my business is now almost completely paperless. I can't wait for the day when a full automation of work orders, workflow, scheduling, tech commissions and invoicing can handle the majority, if not all, of my business activities.



The SEMA Show is the place to find new products and strengthen supplier relationships.

For me, these days it is discovering those types of processes for my business that becomes the biggest incentive for me to attend SEMA, and I can't wait to see what the 2023 show has in store.

I hope you find what you are looking for as well, and when you do, please look me up and tell me your story. I will be at all the SEMA PRO events and hanging around the West and North Halls. Safe travels! ***TS***



Named the 2022-23 SEMA Person of the Year, ***JOSH POULSON*** *is the principal of Auto Additions in Columbus, Ohio, which was named Restyler of the Year, 2012-13. Auto Additions offers a complete line of product upgrades including 12V and appearance packages with a specific focus on the dealership segment. Josh is chairman of the SEMA PRO council.*





LOOKING GOOD

Simple steps to ensure a positive first impression. ///// **By Jhan R. Dolphin**

Sorry, but looks matter. Yes, it may be a bit politically incorrect these days, but I am mostly referencing your business.

The reality is, people judge. When was the last time you made an assumption about someone or something? Our assumptions are made instinctively (within just a tenth of a second), whether correct or not.

So, it's fair to say that first impressions matter.

Your challenge as an industry retailer is accepting the responsibilities that come with being judged and reacted to, with the overall goal of leaving a strong and positive first impression on your customers, vendors and the enthusiast community. It's the first step to increasing sales and being successful.

Here are three areas of your business to focus on for immediate improvement:

1 BUSINESS EXTERIOR/STOREFRONT

A potential customer will place some level of judgment on the first impression made by your business exterior. Is your parking lot clear of trash and does it provide customers with easy parking options? What are people seeing through your windows? If there are vendor posters or promotional banners that have faded from the sun or are terribly outdated, remove them. Even cleaning the front door glass helps to ensure a positive impression.

Think about your sign. Does it clearly identify the services and products you sell? Why make people guess? If the business sells performance and race gear, it doesn't help to have a sign that says, "ABC Automotive" when it could say, "ABC Race and Performance Products."

A potential customer will place some level of judgment on the first impression made by your business, inside and out.

Never assume that people will just "get it"—instead, provide them with a clear understanding of what you do. Make it easy.



Get together with your team and ask important questions about who you are, and who your customers are.

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Work to create the best possible first impression.

Also, when was the last time you drove past your store? Unfortunately, many business owners only drive to and from the location, never taking time to consider what regular consumers see as they pass by the address.

Are there trees or shrubs that block the sign from one direction? Are all the sign letters lit at night?

If you were a potential customer, what would help you decide to stop in? Imagine if a few simple exterior improvements resulted in just a few more customers visiting your location each week.

2 INSIDE THE STORE

When customers walk into the store, what do they see? They will naturally look around. Make sure the most popular items are on display, in the categories that most customers will be interested in.

Also, make sure all the lights are working and any visible graphics, posters or literature are current and in good taste.

And, make sure it is clean! How can you promote quality work and taking care of customer vehicles if the first impression they get is of an unorganized, dirty or unkempt business?

Next, attire matters. This is a simple but often overlooked detail that can add to your professional presence and credibility. Having your entire team dressed the same in clothing items (shirts, jackets, hats, aprons, etc.) featuring your logo is an easy way to set yourself apart from the competition.

Even the verbal greeting you use to welcome customers is an important aspect of their first impression. I suggest that you settle on a consistent greeting and insist that everyone uses it. I prefer something simple like, "Welcome to (business name)."



How can you promote quality work and taking care of customer vehicles if the first impression they get is of an unorganized, dirty or unkempt business?

3 SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE

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Identifying your "business culture" is an important part of understanding how to communicate with and sell to more buyers.



Logoed attire is an easy way to set yourself apart from the competition.

always torn regarding social media. Part of me is disgusted with the negativity and harm it can cause people.

Yet, it is also an important business tool that must be used properly in today's world.

It is necessary to keep your brand in front of your target audience. Your brand is not your logo or your physical location—it is the emotions and/or feelings that customers get when they see your location, staff, vehicles and logo.

Developing a brand strategy for your organization takes a substantial amount of work and is much more involved than we have space for in this article.

However, I encourage you to understand a few things about your brand before jumping into social media.

First, get together with your team and ask important questions about who you are and who your customers are. Where do they live? What type of music do they listen to? What do they do for fun? What type of occupations do they have?

True, these answers can be all over the map, but you should start to get a clearer idea of who you are selling to, and how they want to interact with you.

Identifying your "business culture" is an important part of understanding how to communicate with and sell to more buyers.

Having a better idea of who you are speaking to, and how they want to be communicated with, also provides you with something of a social media road map as to what you should post, where you should post it, and how it should be presented. Make sure that the first impressions on social media are consistent with your brand image and speak in a way that your customers will identify with and enjoy.

Meanwhile, most of us still rely on a company's website for information. Often, it will be the first impression for most of your customers. Therefore, don't ignore it.

I suggest keeping the written text to a minimum while focusing on impactful images that appeal to your target market. Of course you should include detailed information about your hours and address, and easy ways to get in contact with you.

Maybe add a bullet point list of your services as well, or a FAQ (frequently asked questions) page where you can list the same queries that you're typically asked by customers, with clear answers that emphasize why your shop is the best place for them to visit.

As parts and accessories retailers, we all need to take a regular look at every first point of contact (website, social media, physical location and staff). Train your team on how to greet and interact with customers, and make sure cleanliness and order are top priorities.

Paying close attention to these items will ensure that you are on your way to creating the best possible first impression. ***TS***

JHAN R DOLPHIN *is vice president of Michigan-based concept vehicle and prototype development company Prefix Corp., and owner of marketing and promotional company J Robert Marketing. He often speaks to industry groups on sales, marketing and various business topics. Email jhan.dolphin@prefix.com.*

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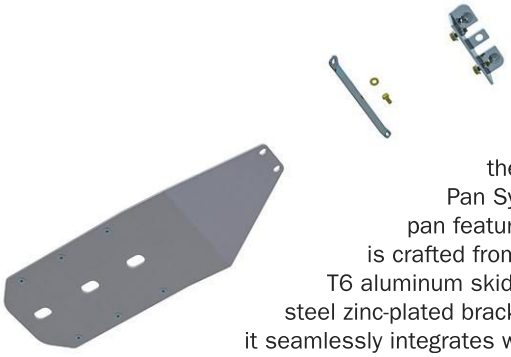
Recovery Gear

Quadratec, West Chester, Pennsylvania, introduces Res-Q brand Recovery Straps, Recovery Ropes, Tree Saver Straps and Soft Shackles. Res-Q's Recovery Strap expands to 30 feet and offers a 40,000-pound breaking strength with durable protective padding. The 30-foot Recovery Rope is double-braided nylon with a breaking strength of 29,000 pounds. The 8-foot Res-Q Tree Saver Strap stretches under load for easy recovery and features padded sleeve protectors that offer reinforced closed loops. And the Res-Q Soft Shackle easily attaches to any recovery point.

Truck Storage



Ecoological, Rocklin, California, presents the Aero-Box truck storage solution. The distinctive box system mounts at the back of the truck bed, providing easy access and optimal utilization of available space. An easy-in/easy-out, dockable mounting placement paired with a secure design offers convenience, utility and secure cargo storage.



Aluminum Belly Pan System

Artec Industries, North Salt Lake, Utah, presents its state-of-the-art Alpha Series Aluminum Belly Pan System for Jeep vehicles. The belly pan features a sleek, flush-panel design and is crafted from 1/4-inch-thick, heat-treated 6061 T6 aluminum skids and reinforced with 3/16-inch steel zinc-plated brackets. Precision CNC cut and formed, it seamlessly integrates with factory components. Get total protection with the belly pan system or choose modular options like oil and transmission pan, fuel tank, transfer case, eTorque skid or exhaust skid protection.

Off-Road Shocks



Radflo Suspension Technology, Fountain Valley, California, presents new ROAM Series 3.0 off-road shocks. Specifically made for vehicles with larger chassis such as full-size Chevrolet and Dodge trucks and Ford F-350 pickups with camper conversions, the premium upgrades include standard adjusters, with optional Hi/Low adjusters to fine-tune the added weight. New ROAM Series (Radflo Offroad Adventure Made) shocks offer enhanced load-handling capabilities and adjustable damping for an improved ride.



Wrangler JL Lift

Tuff Country, Phoenix, a **DPI Off-Road Brand**, introduces a 2-Inch Suspension Lift Kit for 2018-22 Jeep JL and JLU Wrangler models. Crafted to provide a hassle-free and budget-friendly solution, the complete kits include shock extension brackets.



Tundra Fender Flares

EGR USA, Ontario, California, offers UV-protected Summit Fender Flares for a variety of 2022-24 Toyota Tundra models. The American-made, smooth ABS plastic flares are robotically trimmed for a precise original equipment fit. Designed to provide an upgraded, premium look and additional tire coverage, they can be painted to match factory colors. Corrosion-resistant hardware is included, with no drilling required for installation.

Smart Mirror With Video Recording



Rydeen Mobile Electronics, Torrance, California, introduces 360 VIEW-SPL, the latest in its line of smart digital mirrors. Designed as a slimmed down version of the company's popular TOMBO 360X, the 360 VIEW-SPL brings the immersive experience of 360-degree surround video recording to users in a more compact and practical package. Other features include a back-up camera, mounting bracket for full mirror replacement and hardwire kit for professional installation.

LED Lighting Series



Stinger Electronics, Clearwater, Florida, an **AAMP Global** brand, introduces enLIGHT10 RGB Lighting Solutions. Offering a variety of LED lighting products for cars, boats, Jeeps and UTVs including rock light kits and LED RGB strip lights, the new product line was built to integrate with the Stinger HEIGH10 10-inch infotainment system (UN1810). With the integration, users can access enLIGHT10 lighting controls directly on the UN1810 infotainment screen without using an app.

Tacoma Taillights

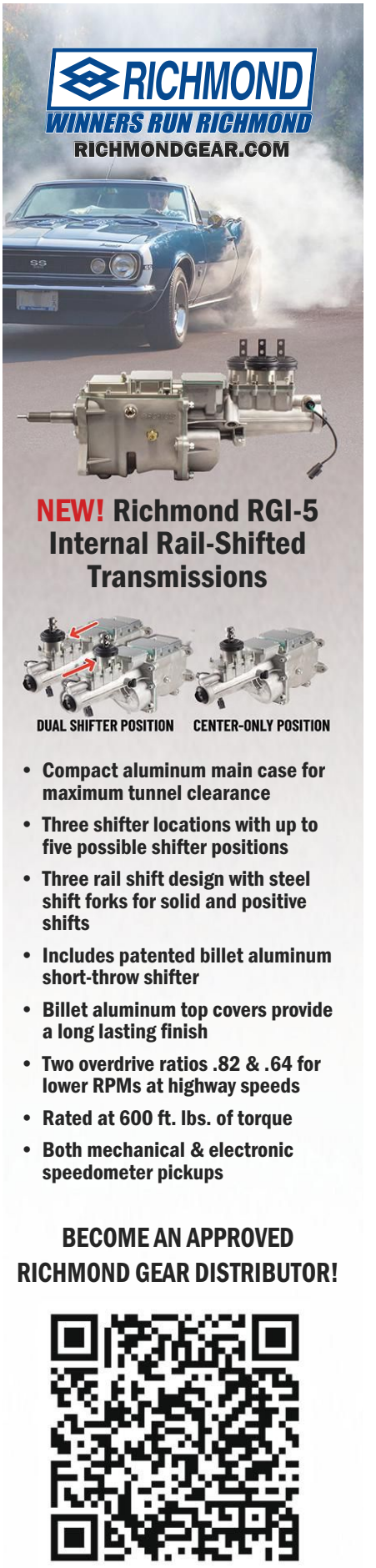


Oracle Lighting, Metairie, Louisiana, offers flush-mount LED Taillights for 2016-23 Toyota Tacoma models. A low-profile design delivers a more streamlined appearance while also reducing the risk of damage. Functional LED lighting elements include high-powered reverse lights, unique signature perimeter lighting and an animated turn signal sequence. A modular design allows the lights to be partially disassembled for painting.

Drop Hitch



GEN-Y Hitch, Nappanee, Indiana, presents the GEN-Y PHANTOM Drop Hitch. Designed for use on 1/2-ton trucks and SUVs, the PHANTOM has a 5,000-pound towing capacity rating and comes with a ball mount that is easily adjustable to ensure a level towing height. The hitch can also be flipped upside down in the rise position, providing maximum adjustability.



Off-Road Recovery Sets



Bubba Off-Road Recovery Gear, Altamonte Springs, Florida, offers targeted Recovery Gear Sets designed for different types and sizes of off-road vehicles. Combining popular, highly rated recovery products, the three separate sets are designed for UTVs, Jeeps or similarly sized vehicles, and 1/2- to 3/4-ton trucks and SUVs. Each Gear Set includes one Power Stretch recovery rope with vinyl armor Gator-ized coating in 20- or 30-foot lengths, two NexGen Gator-Jaw synthetic soft shackles and one strong, lightweight nylon mesh gear bag.

Ford 60-Gallon Replacement Tank



Transfer Flow, Chico, California, presents its 60-Gallon Ford Midship Replacement Tank. The high-capacity tank includes exterior fuel lines and a relocated water separator to maximize available chassis space. Made from 12-gauge ReliaSteel, high-yield U.S. aluminized steel, for improved strength and durability, the system includes all installation components.



Twin-Powered Air Compressor

Overland Vehicle Systems, Santa Fe Springs, California, presents the **Up Down Air** EGOI 2 Air Compressor. Designed to withstand extreme elements, the powerful, twin-powered system directly integrates into Up Down Air's Air Delivery System (ADS). Features include aircraft-grade 6061 aluminum bodies and high-performance motors with a thermal cutoff switch that produce 6.1 cfm of pressure.

Inflatable Frame Technology



Dometic, Elkhart, Indiana, presents AIR Frame Technology that shrinks the footprint of the company's TRT 140 Air rooftop tent and HUB 2 freestanding inflatable shelter. Using the provided pump, the AIR Frame only needs to be inflated to approximately 9 psi to create a rigid structure that holds up against the elements. The TRT 140 Air rooftop tent includes a unique tri-fold design that saves space on the roof without relying on structural poles, while the HUB 2 shelter can be collapsed into its own backpack.



Road-Legal Fog Lights

Baja Designs, San Marcos, California, introduces its S2 SAE road-legal fog lights. Combining power, precision and versatility, S2 SAE delivers 1,210 lumens per light, illuminating the road or trail with clarity and sharp precision. Utilizing aspheric projector optics, the fog lights produce highly controlled light patterns with sharp cutoffs, ensuring optimal visibility while meeting SAE J583 fog requirements. Amber and clear options are available.

Bronco Tubular Upper Control Arms



ICON Vehicle Dynamics, Riverside, California, presents Tubular Upper Control Arms for new Ford Bronco applications. The tubular UCAs—along with rear links and track bar—free up movement to provide maximum travel for performance shocks and coil-overs. Built-in caster adjustment allows for better front end alignment on lifted vehicles. The all-new Delta Joint PRO provides a host of durability and performance improvements including up to 90 degrees of free articulation and is fully rebuildable.

Bus Interface Module



Dakota Digital, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, presents its new BIM-01-2-FTCH Bus Interface Module that fits new **FiTech** LS, TBI and TCU applications. Designed to read engine information from new FiTech EFI kits, the module connects with a supplied 2.5mm Y-harness, allowing the handheld controller to remain functional. It collects and outputs vehicle information including speedometer, tachometer, coolant temp, boost PSI, air/fuel ratio, intake air temp, transmission temp and gear position readings.

Colorado Bump Stop Kit



Timbren Industries, Whitby, Ontario, introduces its Active Off-Road Bump-stop Kit for the rear suspension of 2015-current Chevrolet Colorado and GMC Canyon pickups. Kit ABSGMFK replaces the bump stop pads on the top of the leaf springs to smooth out the ride by softening axle engagement and disengagement, thereby reducing stress on the vehicle and giving the driver more control.

Ceramic Coatings



XPEL Inc., San Antonio, introduces four new Ceramic Coating products to its FUSION PLUS lineup of paint protection offerings. FUSION PLUS PREMIUM maximizes durability and resistance to environmental elements, providing a solid and resilient shell. FUSION PLUS SATIN is specially formulated to protect satin paint and XPEL STEALTH paint protection films. FUSION PLUS LITE offers improved water-repelling properties and is easy to maintain. And FUSION PLUS AIRCRAFT is a ceramic coating specifically designed for flying machines.

Jeep Lighting



D&C Designs, Ogden, Utah, presents its Lucid VSL Vehicle Side Lights for Jeep JK, JL and JT Gladiator models. Designed to improve on- and off-road lighting, the systems are sold in sets and help solve safety issues related to nighttime driving. Easy to install, the lights bolt on to both front quarter panels of the vehicle and don't require cutting or brackets. Made in the USA, the lights are available in black, white and all Jeep colors based on factory codes. ***TS***

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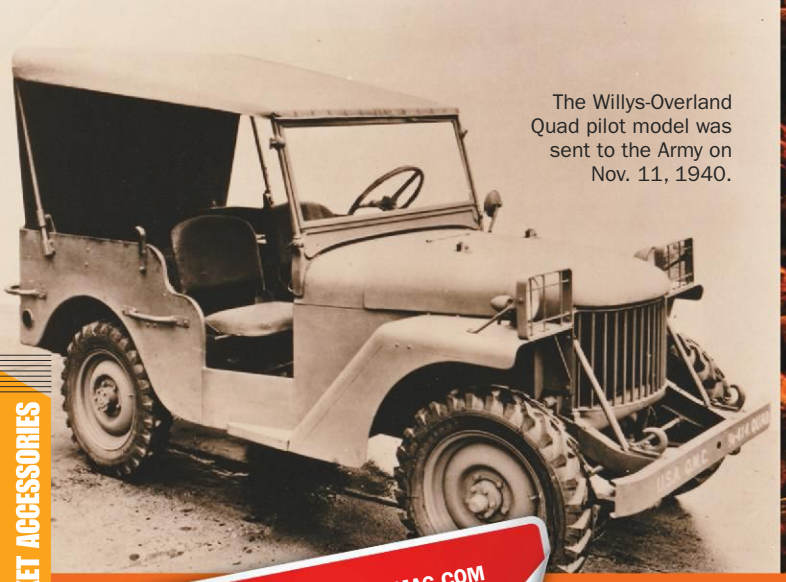
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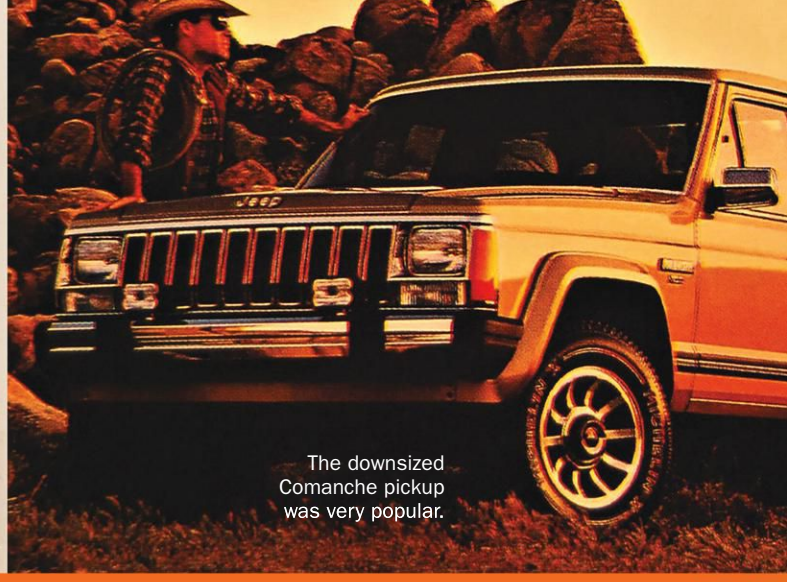
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The Willys-Overland Quad pilot model was sent to the Army on Nov. 11, 1940.



The downsized Comanche pickup was very popular.

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THE WARRIOR'S NEW CLOTHES

Post-WWII Jeeps changed from fatigues to civies into the '90s. ///// **By John Carollo**

Almost everyone has read or seen on television the early history of the Jeep as a World War II military vehicle. It's a fascinating story that goes beyond the automotive world into the American legend of mobilizing industry—including the auto industry—to create an "arsenal of freedom" that helped win battles in two parts of the world.

The victories in Europe and Asia made the Jeep brand famous and valuable.

To the many shops that repair, accessorize and restyle Jeeps today, and those who see dozens of custom-built Jeeps at the SEMA Show or hundreds of the go-anywhere types at jamborees and off-road events, a more important part of the Jeep story is how the "Universal Jeep" of the 1940s became the versatile, civilian-oriented work, play and luxury vehicle that enjoys a passionate, dedicated following.

Let's look at the 50-year span that made "Jeep" a household word.



The 1946 Jeep CJ2A civilian utility, based on WWII MB, bowed in August 1945.

AT HOME IN THE HOME

The civilian evolution of the Jeep actually began before World War II ended. In 1944, plans were under way to exploit the use of Jeep vehicles for agricultural purposes.

That year, Willys-Overland produced 22 prototypes of the projected civilian vehicle under the code name CJ-1A. The "CJ" stood for "Civilian Jeep."

Those prototypes led to the production of the first civilian Jeep CJ. The CJ2A was introduced in August 1945.

These models were to have the Jeep name stamped on the tailgate, window frame and hood. However, when production started, Willys-Overland was still involved in liti-

store more

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In 1946 Jeep debuted the first all-steel station wagon. 4WD was added in 1949.



The Gen 1 Jeepster was introduced in 1948 and built through 1950.

gation before the Federal Trade Commission with American Bantam Car Co. and Minneapolis Moline Power Equipment Co. over the origin of the Jeep trade name.

Most experts agreed that E.C. Segar's Popeye comic strip originated the name. "Eugene the Jeep" was a small, impish animal that had the power to travel between dimensions. Like the Jeep vehicle, Eugene could solve all kinds of problems.

When those early CJ2A models went down the Willys-Overland assembly line at the factory in Toledo, Ohio, they were stamped with the Willys name. Even though Willys-Overland would eventually win the right to use the Jeep name on its products, the Willys name stayed on Jeep vehicles into the 1950s.

The potential for Willys to create new kinds of postwar vehicles based on the Jeep didn't end with those prototypes dreamed up by company executives and independent industrial designers, such as Brooks Stevens.

In 1946, Willys-Overland introduced the industry's first all-steel station wagon and a spinoff sedan delivery truck (both four-cylinder-powered). The next year, a four-wheel drive pickup truck and a Willys six-cylinder engine arrived. The CJ3A Universal and Jeepster Sports Phaeton were added in 1949.

Willys-Overland ushered in the 1950s with a horizontal grille for the Jeepster, a new V-grille for trucks, new 1/2- and 1-ton pickups and high-compression Hurricane Four engines designed by Delmar



A 1950 Willys 1-ton 4WD pickup.



The Gen 5 Jeep CJ5 universal was built from late-1954 to 1983.

"Barney" Roos, the father of the military Jeep. There was also a new 75-hp Lightning Six for Jeepsters and two-wheel drive station wagons.

By this time, the Jeep name was getting very famous and, in April 1953, industrialist Henry J. Kaiser bough the company for $60 million. It was renamed Willys Motors and refocused more on the international market.

The following year saw the launch of a new CJ5 model with softened styling, drivetrain improvements and comfortable seating. It was based on the Korean War M38 of 1951 and would survive until 1983.



Jeep's J Series 4WD Gladiator pickup entered production in 1962.

Kaiser continued producing the utility line of Jeep Universal vehicles and Willys Aero-type passenger cars through the mid-1950s, adding two more unique models.

The two-wheel drive Jeep Dispatcher with a surrey top bowed in 1955. The next year, a pair of forward-control trucks—the 1/2-ton FC-150 on the 81-inch CJ5 chassis

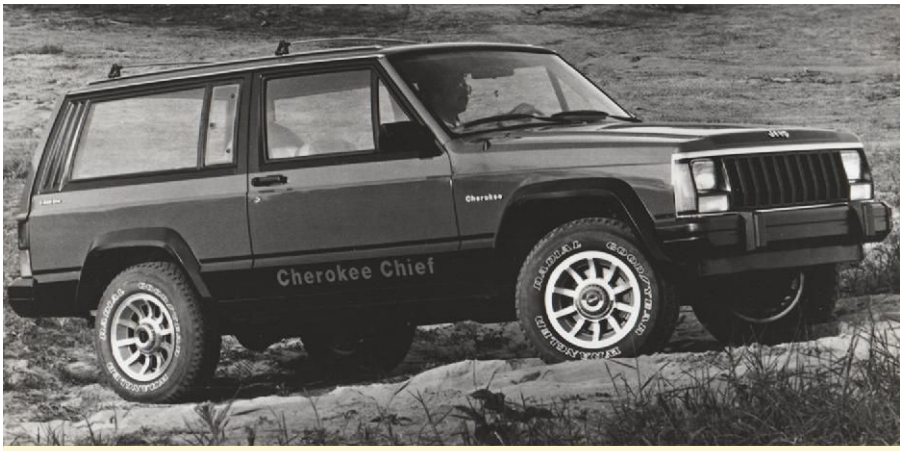




This 1966 Jeep J Series Super Wagoneer V-8 was used for taking publicity photos.



In 1967, the Jeepster Commando was offered as a wagon, convertible, pickup or roadster.



The XJ-based 1984 Cherokee sport wagon became the most profitable Jeep in history at that time.

and the 1-ton FC-170 on the 103-1/2-inch station wagon chassis—were introduced. Stevens customized several of these with van bodies and Henry J. Kaiser used one personally.

In the mid-'50s, Kaiser initiated an extensive research and engineering program aimed at broadening the domestic and worldwide market for four-wheel drive "sport utility" vehicles.

The company established manufacturing facilities in about 30 countries and marketed Jeeps in more than 150 nations worldwide.

TRUCKS & SUVS TAKE ROOT

The 1960s were important years for Jeep and the Jeep name, as that's when the true civilian sport utility market niche was born.

The efforts Kaiser put in to have Jeeps recognized around the globe made the brand famous and built its value to not only Kaiser Corp. but also to future owners such as American Motors Corp., Renault Automobiles of France and Chrysler Corp.

Things started to click in the fall of 1962, when Kaiser-Jeep launched the J-Series line of Jeep Wagoneer station wagons and Gladiator pickups. Described in ads as "All-new and All-Jeep" these vehicles got the expanded SUV market rolling.

In those days, Jeep owned the niche, although Ford, Chevrolet and GMC had started to get away from using aftermarket converters such as Marmon-Herrington and NAPCO, respectively, and Dodge had started doing factory-built four-wheel drive (Power Wagon) versions of its C-Series trucks in 1957.

International Harvester's Scout was also a minor factor (although big for an IH product) and Studebaker turned out a few four-wheel drive Lark pickups as well.

The J-Series trucks were redesigned in every respect from the 14-year-old Willys station wagons and pickups introduced shortly after World War II.

The J models included two-wheel and four-wheel drive versions of the Wagoneer and were the first sport utility vehicles that didn't have any military design roots.

They were bought for and adapted to military applications, but they were styled from the get-go as civilian models.

The 110-inch wheelbase Wagoneer offered two- and four-door wagons that were the first station wagons to combine passenger car styling and comfort, automatic transmission convenience and four-wheel drive. The power plant was America's only overhead-cam engine at the time.

In addition to four-wheel drive pickups, the Gladiator line offered a panel delivery truck. There were two series of 1/2-ton pickups: the J-200 with a 120-inch wheelbase and the J-300, a heavier-duty version with a 126-inch wheelbase.

SO LONG, WILLYS

Six months after these trucks debuted, the Willys name was gone. S.A. Girard, vice president of Willys Motors Inc., announced the new name as Kaiser-Jeep Corp.

Girard said this was done to "properly identify the Toledo company as one of the growing Kaiser family industries and to more closely associate the company with its famous Jeep trademark as applied to its entire line of products throughout the world."

The new name was quickly accepted, and Jeep's fame continued to grow in the U.S. and beyond. In the fall of 1965, a

new Dauntless V-6 engine was introduced for both CJ5 and new CJ6 models. The 155-hp engine nearly doubled the output of the Hurricane Four, and it was the first time a V-6 was used in a Jeep—but certainly not the last!

While the Universal Jeep engine became Dauntless in 1965, the Wagoneer and Gladiator models received a power boost from a new, extra-cost 327-ci Vigilante V-8 with 250 hp. Both the Vigilante V-8 and the 145-hp Hi-Torque six could be optioned with a Turbo Hydra-Matic automatic transmission supplied to Kaiser-Jeep by General Motors.

Four-wheel drive models featured a new dual-range transfer case and ease-of-control shifter, although they did not come with the shift-on-the-fly technology that later Jeeps would offer. A lever located within the driver's reach that could be actuated "with a flick of the wrist" was still an improvement over the cumbersome maze of controls used in earlier models.

In December 1965, Jeep dealers began taking deliveries of Super Wagoneer models, which stressed safety, elegance and traditional Jeep versatility. It was a luxury vehicle built for off-road use.



SUVs quickly caught on with the American public.

Later that year, Gladiators were renamed as J-2000 and J-3000 models. Then, in the fall of 1966, the Jeepster concept returned as the Jeepster Commando. Commando body styles included a station wagon, a convertible, a pickup and a roadster.

At the end of the 1960s, the 327-ci, 250-hp Vigilante V-8 offered in Waggoneers and Gladiators was replaced by a 350-ci Dauntless V-8 with more ponies.

THE WHEELS OF PROGRESS

As America entered the 1970s, Jeep was poised to expand, but Kaiser Industries was not the company to do it.

On Feb. 5, 1970, American Motors acquired Kaiser-Jeep corporation for $10 million in cash, $9.5 million in serial notes and 5.5 million shares of capital stock—a total price of $70 million. It was $10 million more than Henry J. Kaiser had paid.

The change of ownership triggered a decade of growth and expansion unprecedented for Jeep and the entire four-wheel drive vehicle industry. At the time of the





The 1967-69 Kaiser-Jeep M725 is an ambulance model based on the Gladiator.



A 1971 Kaiser Jeepster Commando. The "Jeepster" name was later dropped.

change, Jeep's production was 175 vehicles per day for both civilian and military markets. By the end of the decade, the production of Jeeps was up to 600 per day.

One of AMC's initial moves was to separate military and civilian production by creating two subsidiaries. Jeep Corp. continued to build the civilian models in Toledo, but in 1971, AM General Corp. was established at a former Studebaker facility in South Bend, Indiana, to produce tactical military vehicles, buses and postal Jeeps.

Years later, military versions of the Hummer would also be manufactured there. The plan turned out to be a wise move when the four-wheel drive hobby boomed in America.

One of the first offerings of the new Jeep Corp. was the 1971 limited-edition Renegade II, a four-wheel drive version of the CJ5 incorporating many of the features that had made it a leader in off-road racing and endurance events. There was even a special run of 600 Renegade IIs, of which 200 each were painted Baja Yellow, Mint Green and Riverside Orange to signify Baja 500, Mint 400 and Riverside Grand Prix wins, respectively.

Also in 1971, the Jeepster Commando station wagon was offered with a limited-edition Hurst Jeepster Special equipment option package that included racing stripes on the cowl and tailgate, wide-tread tires, a scoop-mounted tachometer and a choice of Hurst's Dual Gate shifter with automatic transmission or a T-handle shifter with a manual gearbox. The Gladiator J-3000 was also replaced by the longer-wheelbase J-4000 series.

By 1972, American Motors Corp. was starting to make a better impression on Jeep enthusiasts by providing a lineup of models "with the guts to come on stronger than ever." All Jeep vehicles, from the Universal to the Gladiator, came equipped with AMC power plants and all could be had with 304- or 360-ci V-8s.

The CJ5 and CJ6 Universals—now marketed as simply "Jeeps"—were fitted with heavier axles, brawnier brakes, a wider track stance and higher-capacity heater/defrosters.

"If a Jeep vehicle can't take you there, maybe you ought to think twice about going," AMC said.

MORE MODEL UPDATES

The 1972 Commander got a new front end and optional 258-ci Big Six (the 305-ci V-8 was optional), a roomier interior, a stronger suspension and bigger brakes. Gone with the Kaiser grille was the Jeepster name and the convertible.

The Wagoneer and Gladiator came with the Big Six standard and both AMC V-8s optional. The Renegade name was dusted off in January 1973 for performance-oriented CJ5 Super Jeeps with a roll bar, racing stripes, styled wheels, a blacked-out hood, fender flares, a custom-stitched vinyl interior, bright sporty color schemes and a standard 304-ci AMC V-8.

The 1973 Wagoneer introduced the Quadra-Trac automatic full-time four-wheel drive system.

For 1974, the Commando disappeared, and the Cherokee arrived as a sporty two-door model. A four-door version was added in 1977 with a hotter 258-ci two-barrel six standard. Although the sporty Cherokee was similar to the more luxurious Wagoneer at first, before long the names Cherokee and Cherokee Chief would identify the best-selling Jeep products in history.

Also in 1974, the Renegade became a regular production model.

When the United States celebrated its 200th birthday in 1976, Jeep capitalized on the American spirit with the introduction of the Gen 7 civilian Jeep. This CJ7 offered a removable molded plastic top and steel doors.

Both the 93-1/2-inch wheelbase CJ7 and the 83-1/2-inch wheelbase CJ5 would be



The 1991 Jeep Renegade was the ultimate Wrangler with its 180-hp HO I-6.

built through 1983. By then, the CJ7 had become such a hit that it made no sense to continue manufacturing the venerable CJ5.

With the 1978 introduction of the ultimate Wagoneer—the Wagoneer Limited model—Jeep had added a new and unique level of luxury to the four-wheel drive market. The Limited came with standard features such as leather upholstery, air conditioning and AM/FM/CB stereo radio.

As Jeep vehicles entered the 1980s, they were poised to remain the most complete and diverse group of vehicles available in the four-wheel drive market.

ROLLING INTO MODERN TIMES

By 1984, AMC had invested $250 million to create what would be one of the most successful and most profitable Jeeps in history. Based on a newly designed XJ platform, the 1984 Cherokee (two- and four-door) models and the new four-door Wagoneer sport wagons were 21 inches shorter, 6 inches narrower, 4 inches lower and 1,000 pounds lighter than their predecessors.

They featured shift-on-the-fly Command Trac and SelecTrac technology and were named the 4x4 of the Year by three major off-road hobby magazines. In short, these downsized models were an overnight success.

Joining them in the winner's circle over the next few years were the youth-oriented Jeep Scrambler, the Comanche pickup in 1985 and the Wrangler.

Less than a year after the Wrangler bowed, Jeep changed hands once again. Chrysler Corp. acquired American Motors on Aug. 5, 1987. Of course, the real gem it wanted to own was Jeep.

The Jeep vehicle lineup entered the 1990s in its strongest position yet. On March 22, 1990, the 1 millionth Jeep XJ—a red 1990 Cherokee Limited—was driven off the line in Toledo.

Within seven years, the Jeep Cherokee had become the preeminent vehicle of its kind. It was also Chrysler Corp.'s best-selling export model.

By the time Jeep turned 50 in 1991, the Cherokee had strengthened its leadership role with a new 4.0L, 190-hp high-output PowerTech six-cylinder engine.

The 1991 model year also marked the reemergence of a Jeep performance model from the 1970s. The Renegade represented the ultimate Wrangler up to that time. Its 180-hp high-output I-6 engine was the most powerful motor in its class and was also optional in other Wrangler models.

In 1992, production of the all-new Jeep sport utility vehicle known as the ZJ got under way at Chrysler's new Jefferson North Detroit plant. As the '90s unfolded, and the new millennium approached, Jeep reinforced its reputation as the dominant go-anywhere vehicle.

As we know, Jeep still enjoys that position today. ***TS***



JOHN GUNNELL *has been writing about classic cars since 1972. He is also the owner of Gunner's Great Garage in Manawa, Wisconsin. He owns 11 cars and seven motorcycles.*

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ADAS Calibration Basics

The first steps to ensuring driver safety.

By Thomas Patterson

If your shop works on late-model cars, trucks, SUVs or Jeeps, chances are you've encountered Advanced Driver-Assistance Systems—software programs written into the vehicle's computer system that provide enhanced safety features for drivers.

Common ADAS systems include adaptive cruise control, blind spot detection, forward collision warning, lane departure warning and emergency braking.

ADAS calibration is a process carried out by a specially trained service professional to correctly align the vehicle's cameras and sensors so the ADAS systems can work as intended. This may be required anytime a vehicle is repaired, gets a new set of tires or an alignment, receives a new windshield, or when aftermarket accessories are installed.

There are a number of calibration scan tools available that act as trigger devices to initialize the programs. The calibration method required for each project is dependent upon the requirements of the particular vehicle model and manufacturer.

There are three methods of ADAS calibration. They are:



ADAS calibration is a process carried out by a specially trained service professional to correctly align a vehicle's cameras and sensors, so safety systems work as intended. (Photo courtesy Glass Doctor)

DYNAMIC CALIBRATION

Uses a handheld device that is plugged into the vehicle's OBD-II port to access the vehicle's software systems. The vehicle is then driven through an environment at a specific distance, at a specific speed and in optimal weather conditions in order to calibrate it.

STATIC CALIBRATION

Instead of using a handheld device, everything happens in a workshop environment, where the camera sends pulses to set targets, ultimately testing and resetting each module or feature back to the correct parallax setting.

DUAL

A mix of Dynamic and Static calibration.

PROFESSIONAL TIPS

Most ADAS calibration systems come with a scan tool. Every scan tool has its own specified training program.

It's no secret that ADAS offerings are popular with today's drivers. And, as technology and vehicle engineering advances, so will the features of those safety systems.

The main training emphasis is on keeping a laser focus when setting the parameters for target placement. Help your technicians get it right the first time by following these steps, outlined in this example for windshield replacement:

ACCESSING THE VEHICLE'S OPERATING SYSTEM

It is crucial that you only access the area of the operating system that affects your job. The reasoning behind this is you can unintentionally disable someone's vehicle by going into other areas of the vehicle's software.

PRE-SCAN THE VEHICLE

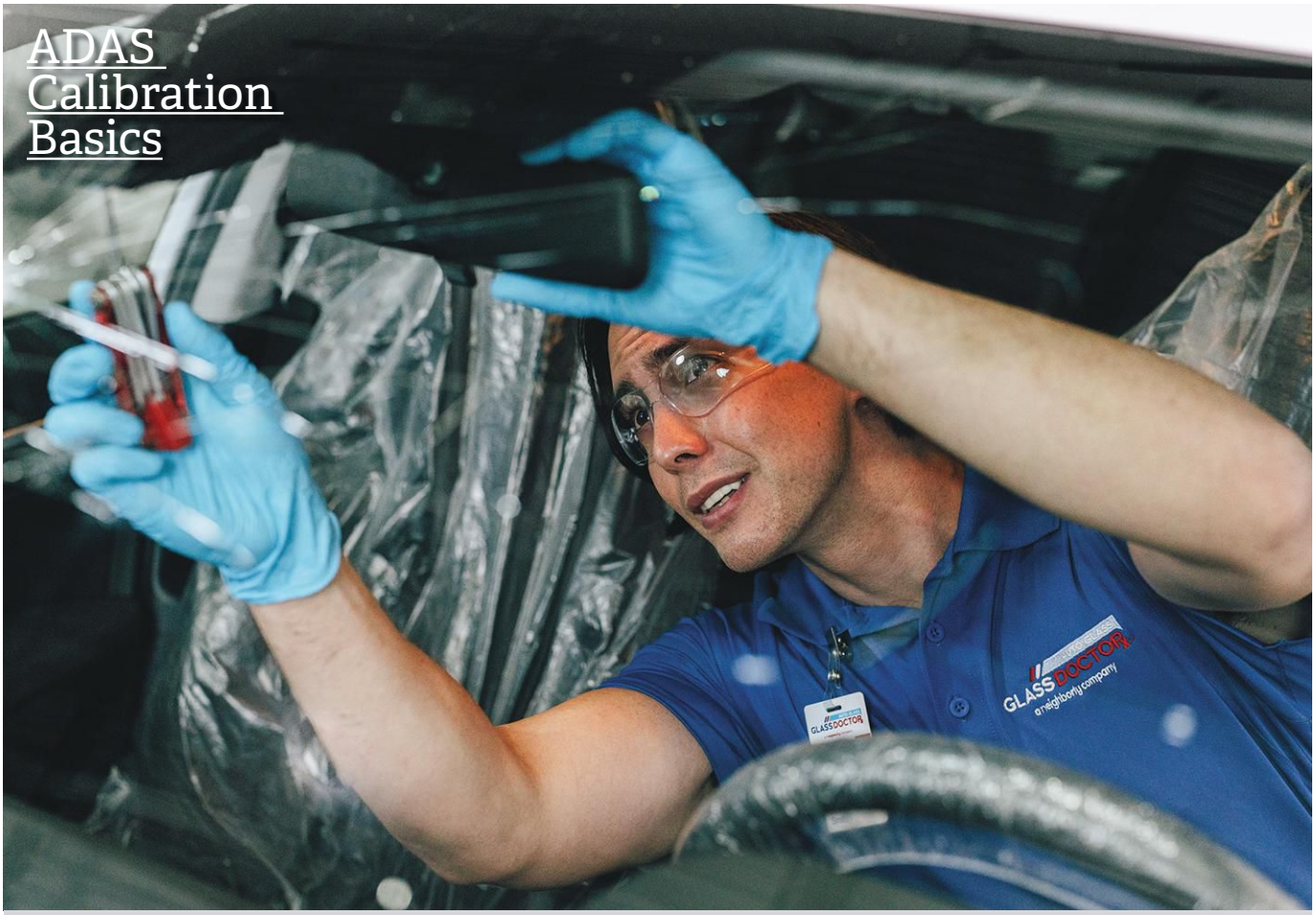
A pre-scan is conducted to make sure there are no existing issues with the vehicle that would impact a successful calibration. Once you determine the functionality of the ADAS system, you can then replace the glass.

TAKE THE CAMERA DOWN

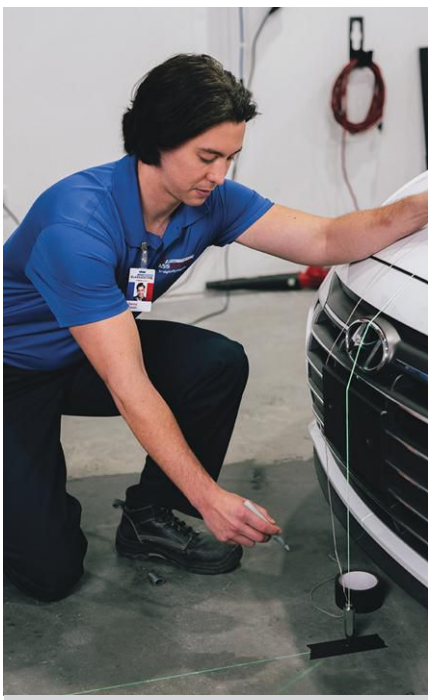
You must remove the camera first



ADAS Calibration Basics



If you haven't yet encountered jobs requiring ADAS calibration skills, you can be certain they are coming soon. (Photo courtesy Glass Doctor)



System calibration may be required anytime a vehicle is repaired, gets a new set of tires or an alignment, receives a new windshield, or when aftermarket accessories are installed. (Photo courtesy Glass Doctor)

by following the removal process outlined by the manufacturer. Once the windshield is replaced, the camera is reinstalled on the new windshield, making certain it is locked into its retaining bracket correctly. Everything is then plugged back in and activated.

INITIALIZE CALIBRATION PROGRAM

Perform the required method of ADAS calibration established by the manufacturer.

TEST IT

This is a very important step required to ensure safe calibration. Try to change lanes without an indicator. Once you do, the vehicle will trigger the ADAS system to make a correction.

POST-SCAN

During the post-scan, service professionals should follow the Auto Glass Safety Council's calibration checklist. The post-scan is used to track and record the results of the calibration. Successful calibration enables the shop to return the vehicle to the customer in the same condition in which it was received.

LATEST ADAS TRENDS

It's no secret that ADAS offerings are popular with today's drivers. And, as technology and vehicle engineering advances, so will the features of those safety systems.

In the next several model years, sequential calibration is coming to the industry. We are going to start seeing service professionals required to do multiple calibration sequences to zero-out all of the components required to keep those systems operating as intended.

If you haven't yet encountered jobs requiring ADAS calibration skills, you can be certain they are coming soon. ***TS***



THOMAS PATTERSON *is the director of new product development and technical training for Glass Doctor. Glass Doctor is a Neighborly company that provides expert glass repair, windshield replacements and custom shower glass installations.*

2023 PROJECT VEHICLE SKETCHBOOK

INNOVATION MEETS TRADITION.



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Regardless of if they are the most rugged overlander or the sleekest racer, the latest project vehicles, special editions and custom builds all have one thing in common—innovation. Every introduction is a chance to do something new, unique and different.

But these amazing creations also have something else in common—tradition. They are all looking to build on more than a century of automotive passion; of vehicles being much more than simply a way to get from point A to point B.

As a specialty company serving the needs of racers and enthusiasts, count Red Line Synthetic Oil among those companies that understand the importance of blending innovation and tradition.

"People say it's hard to have one foot in the past and one foot in the future. For us it is a necessity," says Mark Beatty, Red Line's brand director. "We will never forget where we came from and the products that carried us to this point. Our very first product was our 2-Stroke Race Oil and to this day it is a major part of our business. Since that point we have engineered gear oils, transmission fluids, engine oils, suspension fluids, coolants and more as our industry has grown and needs have changed."

Today's environment is one in which OE manufacturers, race teams, designers and builders continue to push the limits.

"Innovation has always played a major role in the automotive and powersports worlds," Beatty notes. "The advancements just in the last five years or so are unlike anything we have seen before. In our case, customers want thinner oils, increased longevity, better performance—the list goes on."

The following collection of project vehicles and specialty builds highlights the future direction of the specialty aftermarket. If you look closely, however, you'll see traces of the past as well.

"For years we have worked hand in hand with builders and race teams to design, test and develop new products. We never stop learning," says Beatty. "That is not only our tradition, but how we do things."

And how builders continue to create amazing projects.







1958 CAMEO SPEC-TRUCK & 1958 SPECVETTE CORVETTE



Jeff Page from **Heartland Customs** shares a special project that resulted in a unique fleet of custom conveyances.

The customer has a **1953 de Havilland Beaver** aircraft used by the **U.S. Army** and **U.S. Forest Service** that was redone by the team at **Kenmore Air** in Washington and came to Heartland looking for road vehicles to match. Page and his crew delivered a 1**958 Cameo SPEC-Truck** and a **1958 SPECVETTE Corvette** to match the aircraft.

The truck features a 525-hp LS3 by **Don Hardy Race Cars** with retro conversion, a **Bowler Transmission** 4L80E automatic tranny, an **Art Morrison** GT Sport IRS chassis, one-off hubcap wheels by **EVOD Industries** and **Michelin** tires.

The Corvette features a 525-hp LS3, Bowler TRX 5-speed transmission, Art Morrison GT Sport IRS chassis, **Moore & Giles** leather, hubcap wheels from **Schott Wheels** and Michelin tires.

2022 TOYOTA TUNDRA



A jobber will win the **RealTruck AAM Keys to Ride Tundra** as part of the **Keys to Ride** build activation with **AAM Member Warehouse Distributors**. The truck was customized by RealTruck and **AAM Group**. RealTruck brand participants include: **Retrax** (EQ truck bed cover); **Elevate Rack System**, **Auto Ventshade** (AVS Lightshield Pro); **Bushwacker** (Pocket Style Fender Flares); **Husky Liners**; **BedRug**; and **Havoc Offroad** (HVM Bull Bar). See it in booth #50027 at the **2023 SEMA Show**.

JEEP FORWARD CONTROL



A rare, standard cab **1962 Jeep FC (Forward Control)** built by **Roy Wallace** and **1st Gear Offroad** was a **2019 SEMA Show** award winner and is a billboard for a variety of **RealTruck** accessories. RealTruck brand participants include **AMP Research** (BedStep); **Rugged Ridge** (HD Rear Bumper, Off-Road Jack Hood Mount, Jerry Can, D-Ring Isolator Kit, All-Terrain Recovery Tool Kit, Trail Can Toolbox); **A.R.E. Accessories** (Rival LED slim strobe lights); and **Omix-Ada** (Headlight Bezel Kit).

1954 CHEVROLET 3100



Brett Kinsfather from **Shopmonkey** sends info on a **1954 Chevrolet 3100** build by **Full Throttle Garage**. Powered by an LM7 5.3L engine, 4L60E transmission and 9-inch **Ford** rear end with **Strange** limited-slip differential and billet Watts link, and featuring a variety of special touches including a fabbed controller housing, custom wheels with original hub caps and a special wood bed with custom stake sides, the entire project was managed and organized with Shopmonkey's software.

The body is completely original with original patina that Full Throttle treated with **Sweet Patina Sauce**.

The body itself and the gun rack mounted on the rear window are the only original parts.

Participants include: **Roadster Shop** (SPEC slammed custom chassis); **Baer** (disc brakes); **Ridetech** (RidePro E5 air management system); **Dakota Digital** (RTX Series gauges); **Budnik Wheels** (Stratos steering wheel); **IDIDIT** (steering column); **Holley** (mid-mount accessory drive, two-piece valve covers, fabbed intake manifold, throttle body); **Painless Performance** (full custom tucked wiring harness) and **Relicate** (custom distressed leather interior with German Square Weave carpet).

See it in the Shopmonkey booth #11661 at the **2023 SEMA Show**.

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2021 JEEP GLADIATOR



Bed cover manufacturer **EGR USA** showed off its new **Ultimate Jeep Gladiator** at the four **Overland Expo** events held in 2023.

The 2021 Hydro Blue Gladiator JT features EGR's electric retractable EGR RollTrac bed cover, EGR Superguard hood guard with a dark smoke finish and EGR in-channel window visors in a black matte finish.

Participants include: **Leitner Designs** (Active Cargo System rack, HydroPOD portable shower kit); **MAXTRAX** (MKII recovery boards); **Quadratec** (TACTIK stubby front bumper with hoop, TACTIK T10 high-performance winch, Carnivore bumper, Lynx wheels); **Rubicon Express** (lift kit); **Nitto Tire** (35-inch Trail Grappler tires); and **Rock Slide Engineering** (four-door step slider).

1969 CHEVROLET CAMARO

Jesus Lopez of **Lopez Performance Cars** in Riverside, California, highlights a **1969 Chevrolet Camaro** project that will be on display in the **Aeromotive** booth #22743 at the **2023 SEMA Show**.

Owned by **JR Villarreal**, the build started with a consultation with **Sean Smith Design** and features a 1,200-hp **Whipple Superchargers**-powered LSX engine.

Participants include: **Gabe's Custom Interiors** (custom leather); **Brixton Forged** (carbon barrel wheels); **Baer** (brakes); **BASF** (Glasurit paint); **Aeromotive** (fuel system); **Kotto Auto Glass**; **Rick's Tanks**; and **Speedtech Performance** (ExtReme front and rear suspension).





1972 CHEVROLET BLAZER



Marc Lewis at **Hedman Performance Group** sends info on the company's featured vehicle for the **2023 SEMA Show**, a **1972 Chevrolet K5 Blazer CST** dubbed **Gold D Lux**.

Built by **Dan Hogan** and the team at **Hogan Built**, the Blazer includes a 2.9L **Whipple Superchargers** unit atop a **Mast Motorsports** 6.2L LS3 engine with **Hedman Hedders** LS Swap Chevy truck headers and a 4L80 transmission.

Highlights include a fully boxed and customized Hogan Built coil-over chassis, **Vintage Air** A/C system, **Classic Instruments** instrument cluster and **INNOV8 Racing** 17-inch polished G500 wheels.

2024 FORD RANGER



EGR USA presents its **2024 Ford Ranger 4x4** project truck, set up with all of the company's goodies including its all-new, paint-to-code Rugged Fender Flares that accommodate the pickup's wider stance and aggressive tires.

Highlights include a new chassis, four-link suspension, bespoke interior, heavy-duty drivetrain and many unique pieces, including a multitude of one-off 3D-printed and machined parts.

Protecting the front and ready for adventure is the new EGR steel winch bumper, while an all-new EGR Electric RollTrac for Ranger covers the bed and still leaves room for camping gear. The off-roader is also equipped with an EGR Hood Guard, EGR Window Visors and more.

Visit EGR USA in its **2023 SEMA Show** booth #57103.

1967 CHEVROLET NOVA



John Wargo and **The Custom Shop** in Flanagan, Illinois, bust out a killer **1967 Chevrolet Nova** project nicknamed **ReNOVAtor**. You'll hear it coming a mile away with its 427-ci small-block Chevy with **Imagine Injection** EFI with **Holley** controls, and an exhaust with electronic cutouts from **Pypes Performance Exhaust**.

Participants include: **Apex Leather**; **Auto City Classic** (glass); **Car-Rep Automotive Products**; **Cerakote; Covercraft Industries**; **C-TEK**; **Eddie Motorsports** (polished aluminum exterior parts); **Fairchild Industries**; **Flaming River** (steering column); **Garage Dog Creations** (grille); **Gold Eagle Co.**; **Goodmark Industries** (sheet metal); **Hawkeye Industries**; **HushMat** (heat and sound control); **MBM** (brakes); **ODYSSEY Battery; Painless Performance** (wiring harness); **ProSpray** (paint); **RamLiftPro** (coil-over suspension lift); **Roadrunner Performance** (fittings, hoses); **SATA** (spray equipment); **Scosche** (wiring); **Sony** (audio); **Tanks Inc.**; **TMI Products** (seats); **Toyo Tires**; **Tuff Stuff Performance**; **Trulers**; **U.S. Chemical & Plastics**; and **Vintage Air** (HVAC system).

See it in the Sony booth #10521 at the **2023 SEMA Show**.

2023 FORD F-150 RAPTOR R

Hennessey, the Texas-based hypercar manufacturer and high-performance vehicle creator, has transformed the range-topping **Ford F-150 Raptor R** into a six-wheel-drive supertruck with the introduction of its new **VelociRaptoR 6x6**.

Upgrades include an extended boxed frame and a second, fully functional locking rear axle. The suspension features live-valve **FOX** dampers, while **Brembo** performance brakes ensure strong stopping power. A 3-inch lift raises the body in preparation for Hennessey's custom 20-inch alloy wheels wrapped in 37-inch off-road tires. Lastly, an expansive 8-foot-long load bed increases cargo capacity by 45%.

Complementing the mechanical upgrades are new front and rear bumpers, LED lights and Hennessey VelociRaptoR badging. The factory supercharged 5.2L V-8, however, is left untouched.



1974 FORD BRONCO





Custom vehicle designer **ICON 4x4** recently completed a one-of-one custom **1974 Ford Bronco**, its 100th build featuring the legendary SUV.

"The **ICON Bronco 100** is a unique blend of new and old—a balance between safety and refinement with capability while presenting an analog responsibility for the driver," says **Jonathan Ward**, ICON 4x4 founder and CEO. "If you want to have an authentic, real driving experience, new vehicles just don't offer the same feeling. The ICON Bronco 100 allows drivers to be in control. That's a rare, beautiful feeling."

The build features the company's New School design package, a current-generation, 430-hp Coyote 5.0L Mustang GT aluminum fuel-injected V-8 engine, and an automatic 4-speed overdrive transmission with an **Advance Adapters** Atlas twin-stick shifter and two-speed transfer case.

Participants include: **Brembo** (hydro-boosted sport brakes); **FOX** (racing shocks); **Eibach** (coil springs, tunable sway bars); **ARB USA** (air-locking differentials with a dedicated air compressor); **Dana** (differentials); **Spinneybeck** (leather interior); **Dakota Digital** (gauge cluster); **Vintage Air** (in-dash HVAC); and **Elevated Audio**.

1977 DODGE B100 TRADESMAN VAN









Legacy Classic Trucks revives a retro cool classic with its vintage **1977 Dodge B100 Tradesman** restoration.

"There are few things cooler than a super-clean, well-restored van," says Winslow Bent, Legacy Classic Trucks founder. "Our new Legacy Tradesman van restoration is exclusively made for partying. For music festivals and road-tripping, this is the van you want. Classic colorways, amazing interior, restored to drive roads for long periods safely, and modernized with enough battery power to hang with the A/C on at idle for days. The new Legacy Tradesman custom is cool on every level."

Under the hood, the **Chrysler** 318 V-8 engine was completely rebuilt by Legacy and stroked out, giving the Tradesman 450 pound-feet of torque. Legacy kept the original paint scheme, opting to install a pair of moonlight windows toward the rear. The company then integrated a completely new, state-of-the-art electrical system with a large lithium battery capable of powering the vintage TV/VHS, beer cooler, two air conditioning units and 18-speaker, 2,000W sound system.

Highlights include brake and suspension replacements, and interior touches including a disco ball, lava lamp, leather table and orange shag carpet alongside period-correct upholstered textiles.

Groovy!

FORD MUSTANG MACH-E

James Duszkiewicz from the **Ford Mach-E** team and **Neil Tjin** from **Tjin Edition** got together at the **Electrify Showoff** and after 28 Pepsis came up with the concept for the **Tjin Edition Rally Mach-E**. Designed as the ultimate off-road-ready electric vehicle, based on the Mach-E platform, it includes massive hand-fabricated metal flares, custom **RPG Offroad** suspension, 18-inch **Black Rhino** wheels, **Falken** tires and **Rigid Industries** fog lights.

Participants include: **Recaro** (seats); **RTR Vehicles** (harnesses, custom harness bar); **66 Customs NJ** (seat brackets); **KPMF** (Stealth Thunder vinyl); **Eibach** (springs); **Thule**; **ARB USA**; **OPTIMA Batteries**; **RotopaX**; **Switch-Pros**; **Midland**; **Power Tank**; **Warn Industries** (winch); **Factor 55** (tow hook); **Seatbelt Planet**; and **JackRabbit** (OG electric bike).



TOYOTA TUNDRA



Want to sleep six? No problem. Want to cook while roaming the vast areas of Marquette, Michigan? You're covered. Want to take a hot shower while exploring the great outdoors? Consider it done in the **Innovate Marquette x Tjin Edition Toyota Tundra** built by **Jonathan "Red" Roseberger** and **Neil Tjin** from **Tjin Edition**.

The overlander features two **Thule** tents, a full kitchen, custom interior, one-off suspension by **RPG Offroad** and **FOX**, 18-inch **Black Rhino** wheels and **Falken** tires, and custom graphics with **STEK USA** PPF protection.

Participants include: **Bushwacker** (fender flares, custom rock sliders); **Warn Industries** (winch); **Factor 55** (tow hook); **Infinite Offroad** (lighting); **Wilco Offroad**; **Rhino-Rack**; **Klymit**; **RotopaX**; **OPTIMA Batteries**; **Switch-Pros**; **Power Tank**; **SeaSucker**; **LS Upholstery** (custom interior); **Seatbelt Planet** (orange seatbelts); **Midland Radio**; **ARB USA** (fridge); and **JackRabbit** (XG electric bike).

1966 FORD MUSTANG



John Wargo and **The Custom Shop** crew in Flangan, Illinois, are taking a custom **1966 Ford Mustang** named **Double Down** because it is a convertible with a motorized removable hardtop to the **2023 SEMA Show**. See it in the **Sony** booth #10521.

Participants include: **ABS Power Brake**; **AMSOIL**; **Apex Leather**; **Auto City Glass**; **Baer** (brakes); **Cerakote**; **C-TEK**; **Covercraft Industries**; **Dakota Digital**; **DiabloSport**; **Entropy Radiator**; **Fairchild Industries** (weatherstripping); **Flaming River Industries**; **Forgeline Wheels**; **Goodmark Industries**; **Hawkeye Industries**; **Holley**; **HushMat**; **Lokar Performance Products**; **Malco Products**; **McGard**; **NGK Spark Plugs**; **Nu-Relics** (power windows); **ODESSEY Battery**; **Painless Performance**; **Presta Products**; **ProSpray** (paint); **POR-15**; **Prismatic Powders** (powder-coating); **Pypes Performance Exhaust**; **RainGear Wiper Systems**; **Ringbrothers** (accessories); **Roadster Shop** (chassis); **Seatbelt Planet**; **Scosche**; **Scott Drake** (hood scoops); **Sherwin-Williams**; **Spectre Performance**; **Sony**; **Tanks Inc.**; **Trulers**; **Toyo Tires**; **U.S. Chemical & Plastics**; **Ultimate Headers**; and **Vintage Air**.

2023 DODGE HORNET

Is the eye-catching **Hemmings 2023 Dodge Hornet GLHS Concept** designed as a drag car, daily driver, backroad blaster or all the above? The team of **Mike Musto** from **Hemmings**, visual artist **Abimelec Arellano** of **Abimelec Design**, custom car designer **Neil Tjin** of **Tjin Edition** and fabricator **Alex Tourtounis** of **66 Customs NJ** collaborated on the goal of taking viewers and enthusiasts on an episodic journey (to be seen on the Hemmings YouTube channel) of the car's unique development.

Highlights include hand-fabricated metal fender flares, rear lip spoiler, lower rear valance and front lip spoiler, lowering springs developed in connection with **Eibach** and **Direct Connection**, and a custom wrap and graphics by **Daley Visual**.

Participants include: **Motegi** (MF414 Tsubaki Wheels); **Yokohama** (tires); **KPMF** (Matte Sonic Yellow Pearl vinyl); **Wesley Motorsports** (suspension, Direct Connection development tune); and **Gibson Performance Exhaust** (one-off center-port custom exhaust).



2021 FORD BRONCO

The **Supreme Fronco Bronco** is a **2021 Ford Bronco** four-door owned by professional photographer **Frank Gonnello Jr.**, who turned to **Shareef Khan**, owner of **SS Customs**, for help wrapping and protecting his work vehicle.

The factory Cactus Grey vehicle is wrapped with **Avery Dennison** Supreme Defense Matte paint protection film (PPF) to protect against unwanted pinstripes caused by brush on tight trails.



The graphics on the side splash zones utilize Avery Dennison neo noir PPF for added protection against splatter and debris kick-up from the large front tires.

The outermost fender sections are wrapped in Avery Dennison Supreme Wrapping Film Rugged Onyx Black for both a color and textured contrast with the high-gloss black neo noir, as well as to be replaceable over time as the fenders take off-road abuse. The designs on the sides and hood take inspiration from original Ford Bronco First Edition graphics, but with a more aggressive aesthetic to match the high-clearance suspension and widebody modifications of the vehicle.

Visit Avery Dennison at the **2023 SEMA Show** booth #52119.

RAM TRAY BED OVERLANDER

American Expedition Vehicles (AEV) presents its all-new, two-door **Ram Prospector XL Limited Tray Bed Edition** overlander. A red and black Prospector XL that debuted in Moab earlier this year is one of only 10 that will be built.

The Prospector XL Tray Bed can be ordered in either Ram 2500 or 3500 configurations. A black, high-walled, lightweight aluminum utility tray bed that improves stability by lowering the truck's overall center of gravity while also cutting weight is the centerpiece. It comes equipped with AEV's HD front bumper, front bumper low tube, diesel intercooler shroud kit, non-winch cover plate and off-road tires.

Other overland-ready parts and equipment include the company's HighMark front fender flares, a hydraulic-assist steering upgrade, 3-inch DualSport RT suspension system, ProCal module, 17x10 Katla wheels, tire pressure monitoring system sensors, AEV Ram HD rear bumper, 16,500-pound winch system, rear LED lighting, retractable side steps, an optional brush guard, integrated air compressor and spare tire mount inside the tray bed.



BEACH BUGGY



Meyers Manx and **Bespoke Engineering** collaborated on a pioneering radial engine kit designed specifically for the iconic Meyers Manx beach buggy. The 2.0L radial motion engine, which can efficiently power airplanes and cars, pays homage to the heritage of the **Meyers Manx Airways Grumman Albatross**, and brings the signature sound of a radial engine to the street and sand.

Powerful and easy to assemble, the radial engine incorporates standard LS1 V-8 combustion internals and is compatible with a conventional **Volkswagen Beetle** 4-speed gearbox.

2021 CHEVROLET CORVETTE





Label Motorsports owner and designer **Andy Siradakis** is leading the way in custom manufacturing of the American supercar—a Carbon Fiber Widebody program for the new **Chevrolet Corvette** named **Project Vouno**.

Siradakis chose **Avery Dennison** Supreme Wrapping Film Gloss Cloudy Blue and paired it with a satin overlaminate for an exceptionally sleek finish. See Label Motorsports at the **2023 SEMA Show** in the **HP Tuners** booth #23351.

FORD F-100



Velocity Modern Classics is bringing back classic **Ford** trucks with its **1967-72 Velocity Signature Series F-100** program. Key upgrades including a Coyote V-8 engine mated to a 10-speed automatic transmission, all mounted to a **Roadster Shop** chassis, push the well-known workhorses into the modern era.

Available in a variety of paint and trim options, the pickups include Velocity's proprietary serpentine system, IFS, Ford 9-inch rear axle and custom-built exhaust.

Participants include: **Retro Manufacturing** (RetroSound Bluetooth stereo); **FOX** (coil-overs); **Baer** (four-piston calipers with 13-inch rotors); **J.W. Speaker** (LED headlights); **Michelin** (tires); **BASF** (Glasurit paint); **Dakota Digital** (gauge cluster); **Focal** (speaker system); **Vintage Air** (climate control); **IDIDIT** (tilt steering column); **RAPTOR Liner** (bedliner); **Sparc Industries** (steering wheel); and **Alpine** (double DIN head unit, back-up camera).







LAMBORGHINI URUS VISION 2.0



1016 Industries introduces its all-new **Lamborghini Urus Vision 2.0**. Specially manufactured for the Urus S and Performante editions, the package elevates the award-winning SUV with a razor-sharp widebody carbon fiber aesthetic.

The widebody flare package adds 120mm in stance alongside new touches including a race hood, flare extensions and redesigned roof spoiler. The package installs with no cutting or invasive vehicle work, allowing easy reversal back to OEM factory specs.

1977 JEEP CHEROKEE S





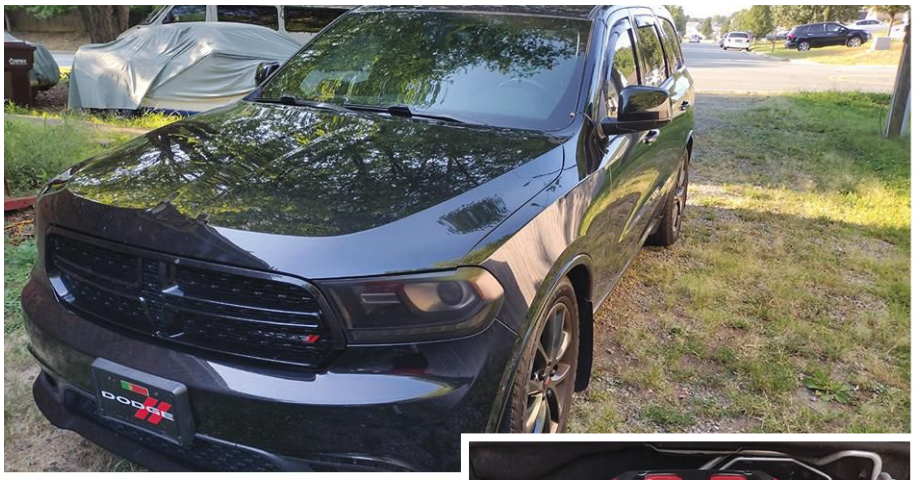
Vigilante rolls out its latest custom creation, a **1977 Jeep Cherokee S**. Blending the original design aesthetic with modern components, the new rig can dominate on a dirt trail or easily handle highway driving conditions.

Featuring a 485-hp, 392-ci Hemi SRT-8 mated to a **Bowler Performance** 4L80E automatic transmission, the Jeep sports modern upgrades including **Baer** six-piston brakes, **Dana** 44 front and 60 rear axles, **Eibach** coils, adjustable **FOX** shock absorbers, **Advance Adapters** Atlas II transfer case and 17x9 Vigilante billet aluminum wheels.

Other modern and retro touches include a sleek Midnight Blue colorway with a Glacier White stripe instead of traditional wood paneling, slate gray interior with a floral design embossed and pressed into the leather seats and door panels by **Moore & Giles**, three-point modern seatbelts, hand-crank windows and manual locks. Its digital gauges and clock are blended to look as close to the originals as possible while displaying all pertinent information, and the notoriously rattle-prone side-view mirrors are strongly attached.

2014 DODGE DURANGO RT

The Dame is a **2014 Dodge Durango RT** build by **Chris "Dr. Mopar" Ketteman** and **Ronald Ketteman** of **Dr. Mopar's High Performance** in Burlington, North Carolina. A nod to **Bettie Page**, 1940s pinups and gangsters, the sleeper SUV is owned by **George Beato**.





The engine was machined by **Rick Gerringer** of **R&R Performance** in Mebane, North Carolina. Rick and wife, **Sherri,** are known for operating **Classic Gear Jammers**. The 5.7L Hemi features ported and polished heads, MDS block-off plugs, a built bottom end with stock-size pistons and bearings, and a full prep of the crank, connecting rods and block by R&R.

Participants include: **COMP Cams** (Stage 1 HRT series cam, upgraded valve springs, hardened pushrods); **DNJ Engine Components**; **Tractor Supply Co.**, **NAPA Auto Parts**; **O'Reilly Auto Parts**; **Advance Auto Parts**; **AutoZone**; **Dorman Products** (oil pan); **Mishimoto** (thermostat); **Spectre Performance** (cold air intake); **BBK Performance** (85mm throttle body); **Hooker Headers** (shorty headers from **Jeep** WK2 platform); **MSD Ignition** (Blaster coil packs); **Brisk Racing** (spark plugs); **Chris Boegler** of **American Muscle Performance** (custom engine tune with **DiabloSport** I3 tuner); **aFe Power** (throttle body spacer); **Enginetech** (lifters); and **MagnaFlow** (exhaust).

2021 FORD BRONCO







PROJECT X was part of the **Bronco Fun-Runner LT (Long Travel)** build from **RTR Vehicles** and the **Fun-Haver Off-Road** team of **Vaughn Gittin Jr.** and **Loren Healy** alongside **Ford Performance** that debuted in the Ford booth back at the **2021 SEMA Show**.

The build features PROJECT X products including its DL.40 lights, ROX rock light kit, GHOST Box and fridge-freezer offering. Other participants included **FOX**, **RECARO**, **Nitto Tires**, **RCV Performance**, **MBRP**, **Spidertrax** and **ARB USA**.

RAM 3500





TruckHouse unveils its latest 4x4 camper, the **BCR**, developed in collaboration with **American Expedition Vehicles (AEV)**. Featuring a TruckHouse camper on AEV's **Prospector XL Ram 3500** platform, the BCR boasts a fully redesigned, vacuum-infused monocoque house that is mated to the truck chassis via a first-of-its-kind carbon fiber-reinforced, torsion-free mounting system.

The build utilizes new HiPR Foils to significantly improve aerodynamics. The HiPR Foils (High Pressure Reduction, "Hyper") reduce the naturally occurring high pressure in front of the cabover by redirecting and controlling drag-induced vortices down the side of the camper, according to the company.

TruckHouse's BCR is the latest continuation in its line of off-grid, four-season expedition vehicles.

McLAREN 600LT



A **McLaren 600LT** custom green exotic from **1016 Industries** commissioned by car collector **Harrison Woodruff** and playfully named **Cricket** is draped in carbon fiber and checks in at 750 hp thanks to the bi-turbo V-8 engine housed in a twill carbon fiber race hood that shaves 17 pounds off the overall vehicle weight.

An array of carbon fiber parts was integrated into the 600LT, including a special carbon fiber front lip, side skirts, underboards and more, all installed by **Global Motorsports Group**. Highlights include a **Voodoo Design** cat-bypass system, **M-Engineering** M838T M-Tuner calibration suite, **Brixton Forged** wheels, and Michelin Pilot Sport 4S performance tires installed by **Echelon Autosports**.

1974 PORSCHE 911 RSR





Retro Designs presents a new **1974 Porsche 911 RSR** reimagined in the style of **George Follmer's** legendary racing vehicle from the 1974 **International Race of Champions (IROC)** series. The competition-inspired RSR features bright Bahama Blue paint and accents famously associated with the 1970s racing series.

Boasting a more powerful motor made for endurance racing and modern-day driving, the Porsche includes an engine and transaxle engineered by **Heights Auto Imports** in Tampa, Florida. The twin-turbo, 3.0L flat-six-cylinder is good for 300 hp, working alongside a special 915 transmission.

The RSR incorporates **Bilstein** coil-overs and front tower struts, adjustable sway bars, rear strut tower reinforcement braces and a strut tower bracing system. **Bigg Red** brake calipers and 930 turbo rotors cover all four corners. Highlights include period-correct gray 917 Lollipop seats, a heated front windscreen, an electro cooler and an '74 RSR IROC roll bar.

Participants include: **Fikse Wheels, FVD Brombacher** (RS carpet kit, door panels) and **MOMO** (steering wheel).

ROUSH SLINGSHOT



Polaris Slingshot and **ROUSH Performance** unveiled a ROUSH Edition model of the distinctive three-wheeler.

"Designed at the intersection of head-turning looks and the performance lifestyle, the **Slingshot ROUSH Edition** delivers a racetrack attitude with exclusive ROUSH branding," the company states.

Built on the Slingshot R platform, the Slingshot ROUSH Edition packs the 203-hp ProStar engine and adds premium components including **Brembo** brakes with exclusive slotted rotors, a Slingshot Excursion Top, **Sparco** pedal covers and an exclusive race car-inspired steering wheel with color accents.

Highlights include: special-edition paint, graphics and ROUSH branding; Slingshot's Excursion Top; paddle shifters; 7-inch display powered by **RIDE COMMAND** and Stage 2 **Rockford Fosgate** audio kit; heated and cooled seats; additional storage bags; and color-matched rear fender.

2022 CHEVROLET SILVERADO

Andy Siradakis, owner/operator of **Label Motorsports**, presents a **2022 Chevrolet Silverado** custom widebody and 2022 **Vorsheer** overland custom trailer

For the finishing touch in high-performance color, Siradakis chose **Avery Dennison** Supreme Wrapping Film in Satin Black for the Silverado and Gloss Black for the trailer for a dynamic contrast. See Label Motorsports in the **HP Tuners** booth #23351 at the **2023 SEMA Show**.



PORSCHE VISION 357 SPEEDSTER



Porsche marked the 30th anniversary of the famed **Goodwood Festival of Speed** in style with the world premiere of the **Porsche Vision 357 Speedster**. The new concept car is the sister model to the **Porsche Vision 357**, with which the sports car manufacturer launched its own anniversary-year celebrations.

While the concept is a homage to the 356, the all-electric Porsche Vision 357 Speedster is technologically based on the **718 GT4 e-Performance**.

Highlights include a shortened windshield, tonneau cover, two-color concept with gray tones Marble Grey and Grivelo Grey Metallic, darker front bumper, Miami Blue quick-release mechanisms on the wraparound hood, anniversary logo with a large "75," "1948" and "2023" in Grivelo Grey Metallic and Miami Blue, unicorn graphics in front of the rear wheels, cameras that replace the exterior mirrors, four-point light signet, vertical grille pattern in the rear, wider track, 20-inch wheels and more.

PORSCHE MISSION X

The Porsche Mission X concept study was set to visit the U.S. for the first time this fall, debuting at **Rennsport Reunion 7** at **Weathertech Raceway Laguna Seca** near Monterey, California.

Inspired by legendary Porsche hypercars such as the **959**, the **Carrera GT** and the **918 Spyder**, the electric-powered Mission X is a collection of ideas and shows a vision of what a Porsche hypercar of the future could look like.

As a concept, it would be the fastest road-legal vehicle around the **Nuerburgring-Nordschleife**, have a power-to-weight ratio of roughly 1 hp per 2.2. pounds, achieve downforce values that are well in excess of those delivered by the current 911 GT3 RS and offer significantly improved charging performance with its 900V system architecture.



AUTOMOBILI PININFARINA ELECTRIC HYPER GT

Automobili Pininfarina is honoring a motorsports icon with a limited-edition version of its award-winning electric hyper GT—the **Battista Edizione Nino Farina**.

With just five cars to be crafted for clients worldwide, bespoke features adorning the exterior and interior of the Battista Edizione Nino Farina pay tribute to the racing legend born in Torino. Each vehicle in the series celebrates one of five milestones in Farina's racing career.

The exterior design is finished in bespoke Rosso Nino, a deep, rich red hue, complemented by a special livery on the lower body, finished in Bianco Sestriere and Iconica Blu. Providing added exterior distinction is the Furiosa Pack, comprising a revised carbon fiber front splitter, side blades and rear diffuser, finished with a Bianco Sestriere pinstripe. The Carbon Accent Pack is finished in black exposed signature carbon.





Dark detailing extends to the Goccia roof, while the Exterior Jewelry Pack is finished in brushed aluminum anodized in black to complement black brake calipers and center lock rings, and the 10-spoke forged aluminum Glorioso alloy wheel designs with distinctive Satin Gold finish.

The pure-electric hyper GT utilizes a high-capacity, 120 kWh lithium-ion battery contained within a strong but lightweight carbon fiber housing.

1967-68 FORD MUSTANG



Velocity Modern Classics announces the **Velocity Mustang Fastback**, a new addition to its Signature Series line. The highly sought-after **1967-68 Ford Mustang Fastback** has been restored to seamlessly blend its iconic style with modern components.

Features include a 5.0L Coyote V-8 mated to a 10-speed automatic or 6-speed manual transmission, a **Roadster Shop** chassis, and modern comforts like **Vintage Air** climate control and a **Retro Manufacturing** RetroSound Bluetooth stereo. Velocity offers a variety of paint and trim options, as well as other upgrades.



Participants include: **Borla Performance Industries** (mufflers); **FOX** (coil-overs); **Continental Tires**; **Baer** (four-piston calipers with 11-inch rotors); **Bosch** (iBooster); **BASF** (Glasurit paint); **Truck-Lite** (LED headlights, LED taillights); **Ringbrothers** (billet hood hinges); **Procar by SCAT** (front bucket seats); **Dynamat** (sound deadening); **IDIDIT** (tilt steering column); **Dakota Digital** (gauges); **Forgeline** (18-inch wheels); **Recaro** (front bucket seat option); **Sparc Industries** (billet steering wheel); **Apple** (CarPlay); and **Focal** (sound system).

2024 INEOS GRENADIER





Meet the **2024 INEOS Grenadier** by **EGR USA**. A prime example of an off-roading legend, it is equipped with more than 20 EGR accessories including an EGR Brush Guard and connecting Easy-Access Step Bars, as well as interior products that keep cargo in place.

Visit EGR USA in its **2023 SEMA Show** booth #57103.



JAGUAR E-TYPE

Known for its **Land Rover** restorations, **ECD Auto Design** recently completed its first-ever bespoke **Jaguar E-Type**. The 2,200-hour white glove service journey starts with the selection of a series II or series III and the choice of either a roadster or coupe.

Clients decide on interior, exterior, audio and electronics options ranging from tailored paint colors to gauge aesthetics. Drivers are offered three drivetrain options—a **GM** LT1, ECD's second-generation EV system or, for purists, a historic Jaguar engine with the 4.2L inline-six in the series II, or the V-12 in the series III.

The first E-Type off the line is **Project Dallas Commission**—a series III roadster powered by a **Corvette** LT1 engine and featuring glossy historic Jaguar green paint paired with tan Nappa leather and all-new chrome accents, 8-speed automatic transmission, handmade **Borrani** wheels, custom luggage rack, heated OEM-style seats in premium **Spinneybeck** leather, a **Tourist Trophy** original-style steering wheel with chrome spokes, and Bluetooth audio system.







SHELBY COBRA RACE CAR





Classic Recreations revealed the first of just 10 licensed **Carbon Fiber Shelby Cobra Race Cars**, dubbed the **Diamond Edition**, at **Monterey Car Week**. The line is a tribute to **Carroll Shelby**'s iconic design and engineering skills, which have captivated collectors for 60 years.

The Cobra Race Car display at Monterey gave visitors an exploded view of the car's design and performance engineering, including the CAD-designed, race-inspired chassis, billet CNC-machined aluminum assembly components, cantilever suspension and more. Capable of 1,000 hp, the Cobra Race Car will provide a bone-rattling experience as a true track weapon, weighing in at around 2,300 pounds and wrapped in an aerospace-grade, pre-preg carbon fiber body.

1964 FORD FAIRLANE

Jake Mina with **Precision Motive** sends word on a **1964 Ford Fairlane** sports coupe build that was completed just in time for show season. The complete makeover from headlights to taillights included a full coil-over conversion and other upgrades.

Highlights include: a Pro-Touring IFS, **Flaming River** column and shaft, **McLeod Racing** clutch, **CVF Racing** pulleys, **Wilwood Disc Brakes**, **MSD Ignition**, **MalWood USA** hydraulic clutch pedal kit, **Dakota Digital** dash and **Dapper Lighting** headlights.







2023 FORD F-550 CAMPER

The **EGR USA GRID** camper by **Wilderness Vans** is designed to be the ultimate off-road adventure vehicle. The **2023 Ford F-550** chassis features a single axle conversion, 40-inch tires on beadlock wheels, **FOX** off-road shocks and an industrial-strength body.

EGR protects the rig with multiple products including its EGR Hood Guard, Window Visors and more. Visit EGR USA in its **2023 SEMA Show** booth #57103.



E-BIKES



Land Rover restorer **Himalaya 4x4** announces a partnership with **Vintage Electric** to introduce a limited edition line of powerful throttle e-bikes inspired by **Land Rover's Series** trucks. The new **Himalaya 4x4 Special Edition Vintage Electric** bikes are now available to order as accessories for each commission with dual sport features alongside matching paint and other touches that sync with each Himalaya 4x4 design.

The bikes ride on **Maxxis** tires with a 72V electric power plant from Vintage Electric's new Performance Line. Engineered with flowing framework lines in the grand stylings of classic board track racers, each custom bike has three times the torque of past models, with a 4,000W drivetrain and 40-mph top speed. ***TS***

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Off-Road Line Repair

AirSept, Atlanta, presents its AirSept Broken Line Emergency Kit, designed for off-road applications. The convenient line repair kit can be used to fix broken or damaged power steering, transmission, trans oil cooler, A/C, and heater and engine oil cooler lines on-site. It comes in a sturdy case and features Smart Splice connectors for metal-line-to-metal-line or metal-line-to-hose repairs without the need for special tools. Certified leak-free up to 2,400 psi, the Smart Splice line repair system has been used by top technicians to make repairs in their shops.

Lubricant Pen

WD-40 Brand, San Diego, introduces the WD-40 Precision Pen, a compact, portable delivery system for its Original WD-40 Formula. Suited for tight spaces on projects of all sizes, the pen is designed for use on the job, in workshops and at home. It offers pinpoint precision and controlled lubricant flow in a convenient go-anywhere size.



Rust Converter

KBS Coatings, Valparaiso, Indiana, presents Rust Converter that chemically converts rust into a permanent, hard and highly durable black surface. Spray it directly onto any iron or steel object that has tightly bonded rust or surface rust to kill the existing rust and stop new rust from forming. The quick-drying formula forms an inert primer layer that can stand alone or be painted over. Designed to save time by eliminating the need for scraping and sanding metal surfaces before topcoat applications, the rust converter comes in 12-ounce aerosol cans.





Steel Stamp Set

C.H. Hanson, Naperville, Illinois, presents a 27-Piece Steel Stamp Set. Designed for marking wood, leather, aluminum, brass, sheet metal and cold rolled steel, the standard-grade stamps are made in the USA and recommended for medium- to light-duty marking. Each textured shank is tempered for the proper dose of hardness and durability. The kit includes 27 pieces—letters A through Z and ampersand—and comes in a special case.



Belt Sander

RMC Engine Building Equipment, Saginaw, Michigan, presents the RMC 800 Belt Sander. Made in the USA, it has a 12-by-32-inch working area with a precision ground platen for large sanding jobs. It quickly sands many different types of work pieces to make them precisely flat. The super-heavy-duty machine is built for shops needing a quick solution for renewing surfaces on oddly shaped parts.

Heavy-Duty Degreaser

Gear Hugger, Solana Beach, California, offers Heavy-Duty Degreaser. The plant- and water-based formula is sustainably sourced from upcycled waste from tequila production and breaks down grime without leaving residue on engines, gears, kitchen appliances and grills. It is nonflammable and free of petroleum, fossil fuels and VOCs, making it safe to use around children and pets. It is currently undergoing consideration by the EPA for the Safer Choice Certification.





Universal TPMS Diagnostic & Programming Kit

Ranger, Agoura Hills, California, a division of **BendPak**, presents the TruSensor universal TPMS solution for diagnosing and programming tire pressure monitoring systems on import and domestic cars, SUVs, vans and trucks. Offering 98% global vehicle coverage, the kit includes a portable diagnostic and programming tool, metal stem sensors, snap-in rubber sensors, USB interface cable, OBD-II cable and power cord, all packaged in a durable, padded carrying case. Use it to test tire pressure, temperature and battery life, and read and clear TPMS trouble codes.



Automatic Wheel Balancer

Dannmar, Santa Paula, California, presents its updated DB-70 Automatic Wheel Balancer that offers reliable, consistent performance with Digital Sensor Technology, seven balancing modes and the ability to handle wheels up to 28 inches in diameter. The system's touchpad panel displays tire and wheel assembly graphics to help simplify the process of entering wheel data. With the wheel on the balancer, the DB-70 automatically calculates the precise amount and location of weight needed for optimal balance in seven seconds. ***TS***





PERFORMANCE

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MORE TO GIVE

By John Carollo

The Pro-Touring market breathes new life into old favorites.



A 485-hp, 392-ci Hemi-powered 1975 Cherokee S Pro-Tourer is Vigilante's latest old-meets-new creation. (Photo courtesy Vigilante)

Many industry folks call the Pro-Touring market the gift that keeps on giving. That's because this popular niche includes so many aspects and genres, not to mention fans from all walks of life.

Pro-Touring covers cars and trucks from all eras—everything from common classics to obscure marques. Whether a typical barn find or a dust-covered "heirloom" that's sat covered in a garage for decades, modern technology is breathing new life into these old favorites.

From the shop's perspective, restomodding can be whatever your customer wants it to be, from mild street upgrades to a high-end custom creation to a full-on race machine.

With the fall trade show season upon us, now is a great time to see what's new and what's hot in Pro-Touring. Suppliers highlight some common misconceptions and ways to increase sales—proving these older vehicles still have more to give.



The handcrafted, two-tone Jeep is highlighted in a cool Brittany Blue streaked with a Glacier White stripe to go with its power, handling and interior upgrades. (Photo courtesy Vigilante)

ADVANCED DEGREES

When Pro-Touring really took off about 25 years ago, the cars were an obvious blend of old meets new. Years of innovation, however, mean that nowadays it's difficult to tell where the original parts leave off and the new ones take over.

"The Pro-Touring market has become much more advanced," observes Trever Cornwell, president of IDIDIT. "A decade ago, people were bolting on upgrades. Now it's very common for builds to include a complete aftermarket chassis with completely re-engineered sus-



MORE TO GIVE

PRO-TOURING PRODUCTS

HOT PRODUCT:
1963-67 Corvette Frame
FEATURES & BENEFITS:
A complete package that will make any Stingray handle and ride like a new Corvette; multilink independent rear suspension; dynamic steering; can handle more than 1,200 hp and keep the car straight without worrying about breaking parts.

Art Morrison Inc.
Matthew Jones
President

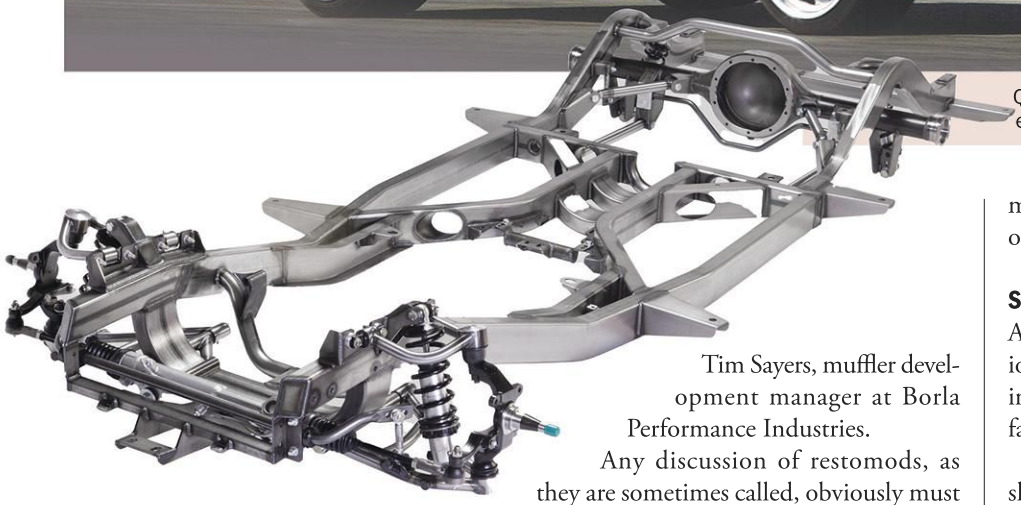
HOT PRODUCT:
CrateMuffler
FEATURES & BENEFITS:
Mufflers that eliminate or drastically reduce drone/resonance on cataloged applications; combination of a muffler that looks like a universal muffler but sounds like a Borla application-specific muffler in one of our Axle-Back or Cat-Back systems.

Borla Performance Industries Inc.
Tim Sayers
Muffler Development Manager

HOT PRODUCT:
1968 Camaro/Firebird Steering Column
FEATURES & BENEFITS:
Tilt steering with a collapsible steering shaft; all-new, made-in-the-USA components.

IDIDIT LLC
Trever Cornwell
President





Quality projects are being built faster than ever. (Photos courtesy Art Morrison Inc.)

pension geometry. The size of the market has grown significantly."

Often basic on the outside, dig deeper and you'll find advanced components to rival any new vehicle.

"Pro-Touring continues to evolve with additional products being available, many of which have improved technology," says Tim Sayers, muffler development manager at Borla Performance Industries.

Any discussion of restomods, as they are sometimes called, obviously must include improved performance—and the time it takes to get there.

"The market has changed in terms of build quality and build speed," notes Matthew Jones, president of Art Morrison Inc. "Lots and lots of high-end cars are being built that showcase immense talent in the industry. Also, cars are being built faster than before. As shops get a backlog of customers, they realize that they need to be more efficient at building these vehicles—or take on easier projects."

SPECIAL BLENDS

As the industry has grown, so have opinions regarding what works and why. Still, insiders agree there are some common pitfalls and roadblocks to avoid.

For instance, Jones believes that too many shops simply open a catalog and choose parts without knowing if they are compatible.

"There are many kits out there for suspensions and such, but mixing and matching parts doesn't always work well, and definitely doesn't compare to a completely engineered package," he says. "In the end, if the car doesn't ride well or is darty on the freeway, some will just shrug their shoulders and say, 'It's an old car,

RASKAL K-5 BLAZER



The latest creation from Ringbrothers is a custom-built 1972 Chevrolet K5 Blazer known as RASKAL.

The latest creation from Ringbrothers is a custom-built 1972 Chevrolet K5 Blazer known as RASKAL. Engineered from the ground up as a thorough reimagining of Chevrolet's iconic off-roader, the Wisconsin shop invested 2,800 hours in the project.

The factory hardtop and side and rear glass have been removed and replaced with a custom full-length, two-piece removable aluminum canopy. The quarter panels and tailgate have been raised to match the door height, with the door handles moved to the top of the doors for a seamless profile.

The extended lowered floor provides a roomier interior and comfortable seating options. Ringbrothers' proprietary BASF Glasurit Waterborne mix called Bashful Blue covers the hand-shaped bodywork.

"RASKAL is all about having fun, getting into trouble and causing some mischief," says Jim Ring, Ringbrothers co-owner. "With this project, we wanted to explore the nuance of sport utility and evolve the K5 Blazer's original lines and proportions into something that celebrated its go-everywhere, do-everything attitude."

Beneath the Ringbrothers carbon-fiber hood resides a 430-hp, Wegner Motorsports-built 6.2L LS3 V-8 channeling 425 pound-feet of torque to the ground through a Bowler Tru-Street GM 4L80E automatic transmission.

Underneath, RASKAL rides on a custom RS4 chassis built by Roadster Shop. The Currie Dana 44 front and Dana 60 rear axles tie to the chassis via a triangulated four-link suspension with FOX Racing coil-overs. Stopping power is provided by Baer six-piston calipers clamping down on 13-inch rotors.

Inside, the cabin features a fully bespoke interior by Steve Pearson at Upholstery Unlimited. In-house fabricated seats combine with Dakota Digital instrumentation and a custom Ringbrothers steering wheel.

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MORE TO GIVE



A TRIO OF E-TYPES

Restoration specialist ECD Auto Design (ECD) unveils a lavish lineup of luxurious E-Type Series 3 roadsters.

Christened Project Narragansett Commission, Project Palm Beach Commission and Project Dallas Commission, the trio represents ECD's thorough customization process to create vehicles for every lifestyle.

Each unique design features a heritage Jaguar color and one of many drivetrain options, including an original V-12 engine and ECD's second-generation EV system.

"Even though they all have the same base vehicle, each client's personality shines through in how they chose to outfit their E-Type. At ECD, we pride ourselves on the customer journey and customization process—these three sports cars showcase a small fraction of what we do every day at the Rover Dome," says Scott Wallace, ECD CEO and co-founder.

Bound for a Rhode Island beach town, Project Narragansett Commission is a Cotswold blue Series 3 roadster at home when coastal cruising. Under the hood, the restored E-Type features an electric vehicle drivetrain with a 150-mile range and Italian-made Pirelli tires.

Further south on the Eastern Seaboard is Project Palm Beach Commission. A shiny silver, the E-Type has the ultimate throwback V-12 engine that was hand-restored in the U.K.

With 400-plus hp, the roadster sits on 16-inch wire wheels. Italian leather seats bring comfort to the old-school build for sunny Florida drives with the top down.



ECD Auto Design unveils three luxurious Jaguar E-Type Series 3 roadsters. (Photos courtesy ECD Auto Design)

The wood-and-chrome steering wheel and classic gauges add a chic touch to the driving experience. New technology, including automatic headlights, Bluetooth connection and an Infinity Kappa audio system round out the beachy sports car.

Finishing off the trio is ECD's first-ever completed E-Type, Project Dallas Commission. The classic green paint brings nostalgic British heritage to everyday driving. Packing a punch with its LT1 engine, it defines the ECD ethos of combining the old and new to build fantasy cars.

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Stay current on how the Pro-Touring market is evolving. (Photo courtesy Borla Performance Industries)

that's the way it is.' But a complete package should solve all drivability issues."

Another build strategy to avoid, says Sayers, is sticking solely with what's worked before.

"A common misconception is that what was popular in the past is currently popular," he explains.

One nice thing about Pro-Touring's staying power, however, is that the vehicles are now celebrated and



New, modern components increase drivability and safety. (Photos courtesy IDIDIT)

appreciated by enthusiasts almost universally.

"In the past, they (Pro-Touring cars) weren't considered a hot rod," says Cornwell. "I think that's changed over the past few years."

MOVING FORWARD

There's seems to be no slowing the interest in Pro-Touring, including for shops looking to turn out as many quality builds as quickly as possible.

"It's all about speed," says Jones from Art Morrison, who recommends investing in products designed for the market. "Items that don't require painting or pre-assembly will decrease build times and people are willing to pay for them."

Borla's Sayers reminds shop owners to pay attention to history.

"Stay current with how the market has evolved. Have an in-depth conversation with the customer to understand their expectations prior to taking on the job," he recommends. "Then, check in with the customer multiple times during the build to make sure what they want hasn't changed. The end result will be a satisfied customer who will promote your shop."

Finally, IDIDIT's Cornwell reminds builders that it's called "Pro-Touring" and not "restoring" for a reason.

"Don't waste your time with factory components, especially steering," he suggests. "They weren't designed for the loads and stresses put on them in a Pro-Touring build that is driven hard or taken to the track."

New, modern components increase drivability and safety.

"We sell virtually all of the components for a steering system to create a more enjoyable driving experience with more modern safety considerations incorporated into them," he adds. ***TS***





THE MAKING OF AN AUTOMOTIVE PERSONALITY

Cleetus McFarland mixes hijinks & a love of motorsports.

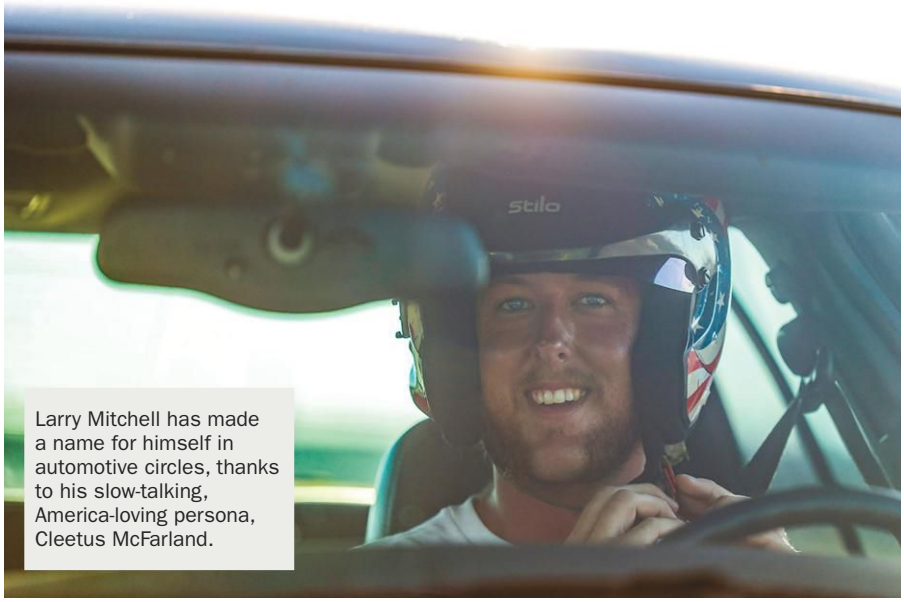
By Tony Thacker, Photos courtesy Holley & Cleetus McFarland

Cleetus who? Cleetus McFarland, that's who.

If you've never heard of him, it may be because that's not even his real name. Lawrence (Larry) Garrett Mitchell is a 28-year-old native of Omaha, Nebraska, who is making a name for himself, literally, in the car world.

To tell his story, let's start by introducing 1320Video, a company launched early in 2003 by Kyle Loftis that was posting videos of car events, primarily street racing, on various message boards, which was the social media platform of the day. Loftis got his start by holding a car wash and using half the proceeds to buy a camera, with the other half going to the Red Cross.

The big break for these guys came in February 2005 when Steve Chen, Chad Hurley and Jawed Karim launched YouTube, an American global online video sharing and social media platform headquartered in San Bruno, California. Owned by Google, YouTube gave the world a platform for sharing, exposing and monetizing videos of all kinds that was particularly embraced by the car world. YouTube itself has a revenue of about $30 billion.



Larry Mitchell has made a name for himself in automotive circles, thanks to his slow-talking, America-loving persona, Cleetus McFarland.

CAPITALIZING ON CAR VIDEOS

According to his own YouTube video, Mitchell got his start in a typically serendipitous way when he filmed a car race



Cleetus McFarland made his competitive driving debut last year and has participated in a variety of motorsports events in 2023.

on his cellphone and sent it to Loftis, who posted it. It was 2012 and Mitchell had just turned 16.

While checking out Instagram, which had been launched by cofounders Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger in October 2010, he wondered if Loftis had an IG account.

"I looked it up and he had a couple hundred followers and four or five posts," says Mitchell. "I texted him and said, 'I see you have Instagram, but you probably don't have time to post on it. Do you want me to run it for you?' He was like, 'Sure, go ahead.' I made my first post on 1320's IG in December 2012. And that was basically when I started working for Kyle."

The following spring, Mitchell went to his first TX2K gathering, a no-prep street car event that was founded in 2000 by Peter Blach.

"I was so young my parents had to sign my friend Chase over as my legal guardian for the weekend, which was super-scary—we did a lot of dangerous stuff. It was my first time filming. It was awesome and we hit 5,000 followers. Over that year and the following year things took off. Instagram went big and we had 100,000 followers and Facebook went big with over 1 million."

Next up was the SEMA Show.

"I wanted to go to SEMA, but we weren't really a full-fledged business at that point," he recalls. "I went ahead and bought my own ticket. I used someone else's badge to get in and had a freakin' awesome time. That's when Kyle and I figured out that when we produce content together, things work really well. That's when Kyle offered me a job, to be paid to do my work, and I basically took over 1320Video's social media. It turned into a full-time job."

Mitchell, however, was also in college at the time, so he would fly out to events on weekends and handle all his work on his phone.

"Even in class I would be constantly posting every hour on the hour from 9 a.m.-7 p.m. We were a freakin' powerhouse," he says.

MEET CLEETUS

Mitchell flew out to Rocky Mountain Race Week in Colorado, and on a whim he and Loftis filmed a video in the parking lot.

"We had been filming for 16 hours and we made this hilarious video in front of Tom Bailey's Camaro—'3,000-hp Camaro Cleetus McFarland.' Little did I know that the video would be what made Cleetus McFarland what it is today. We made the video, which was pretty funny, but while I was asleep Kyle edited and posted it at 3 a.m. I woke up at 8 a.m. and my phone was blowing up and the video, I think, had already reached 1 million views at that point."

Over the next few months he made more Facebook videos to keep the slow-talking, America-loving Cleetus McFarland persona going.

"But I didn't really know how to monetize



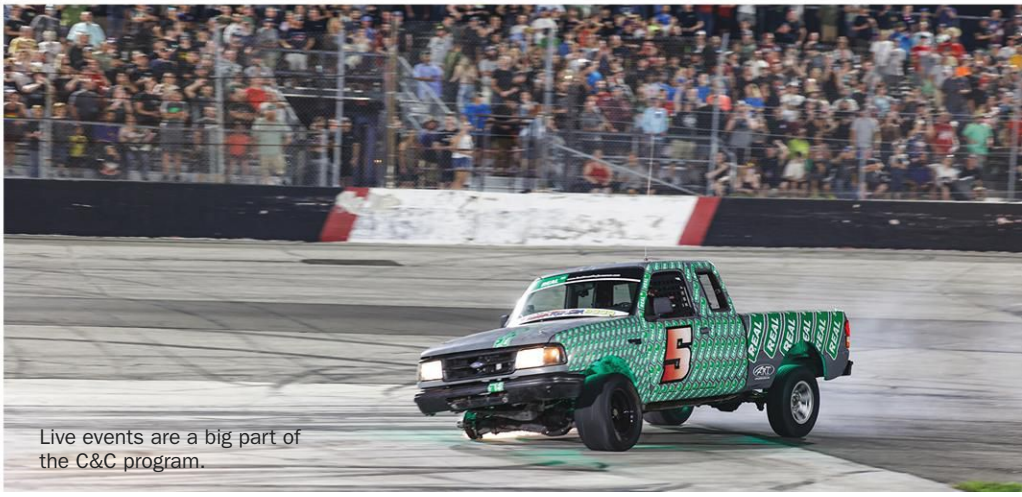
THE MAKING OF AN AUTOMOTIVE PERSONALITY



McFarland hosts a variety of Cleetus and Cars (C&C) gatherings that celebrate fun and fast vehicles.



Many fans attend the events, buy the swag and watch the videos.



Live events are a big part of the C&C program.

it," he says. "I went back to school, focused and graduated, but wondered, 'What am I going to do?' I loved my job at 1320 so much, but I always wanted something of my own. I applied to law school, took out a student loan and began filming the C7 videos. We were on our 10th video, and it had 5,000 views and I thought, 'This is it. We're on it. We're gonna blow up. We got this.' We had momentum and, at that point, I went from focusing on law school to all I could think about was YouTube, but it made me no money—1320Video was my only income."

Not surprisingly, telling his parents and grandparents that he wanted to drop out of law school to become a professional "redneck" named Cleetus was tough.

"But it was time to make this YouTube channel happen," Mitchell says. "I love this job and I love the people and I can't imagine having let it all go to become a lawyer."

Corny as it might sound, Mitchell experienced the American dream. Cleetus currently has 3.2 million subscribers to his YouTube channel, which hosts more than 1,300 videos. Obviously, doing outrageous things in cars and posting it for the world to see is one road to success.

SPEEDWAY OWNER

Just before the COVID pandemic in January 2020, Mitchell says he spent all he had to purchase Desoto Speedway in Bradenton, Florida, at auction for $500,000 and renamed it Freedom Factory.

Owning the 3/8-mile oval track on 63 acres in East Manatee County gives the media company a private, controlled environment for creating content. However, there were some growing pains.

In November 2020, an explosion caused by a radiator hose at a Cleetus and Cars (C&C) burnout event left driver Parker Whitlock with third-degree burns. Reportedly, the reconfigured Fox body Mustang suffered a burst radiator hose that doused Whitlock, who was wearing a helmet but only a hoodie and shorts, with boiling-hot water.

Subsequently, Cleetus McFarland was criticized for omitting the accident from its YouTube coverage of the event. While he did address the incident on his secondary YouTube channel, Cleetus2 McFarland, Mitchell was also criticized for holding an event during lockdown. Drivers have since been required to wear fire suits.

Live gatherings are a big part of the C&C program, and its current schedule lists 13 events that can be viewed either in person or as pay-per-view on the company website (cleetusmcfarland.com). There is a caveat, however, stating, "This schedule is subject to change, keep up with the videos to ensure if the guys are actually going. Sometimes Cleetus breaks all of the cars and we have to cancel on certain events!"

BEHIND THE WHEEL

Cleetus made his competitive driving debut in April 2022 in the Stadium Super Trucks series in Long Beach, California. He was leading on the final lap of the second race when he spun out after the last jump, allowing Robby Gordon to take the win.

In August of last year, he competed in the Music City Grand Prix, but was involved in crashes in both of his races. Finally, last November, Cleetus took first place in the McLeod Racing Warriors vs. Tres Cuarto category of the 26th Annual Haltech World Cup Finals Import & Domestic Drag Races, running 6.474 seconds at 222.95 mph in his twin-turbo 1986 Chevrolet El Camino called Mullet.

In the spring, Cleetus returned to Bristol Motor Speedway (his first event there was in the summer of '22) to entertain fans with various races and stunts. Cleetus himself drove in the Danger Ranger on Dirt competition alongside dozens of Ford Ranger pickups in a 60-lap race on the dirt-covered banks of BMS—Cleetus finished 25th following a blown engine.

Something new for gearheads was the inaugural Demolition Drags. Cleetus describes it as "combat drag racing, where you can do whatever is necessary to try and win the race, including making contact with your opponent's car." Pairs of cars raced down the BMS backstretch in a literally anything goes format.

In May, the circus moved to Indianapolis for the Indy 800. The two-day event combined drag racing with oval action. Saturday saw the Cleetus and Cars burnout



The Cleetus McFarland YouTube channel had more than 3.2 million subscribers as of August 2023 and has accumulated over 1.4 billion views.

contest, while Sunday featured the Indy 800 presented by Heatwave Visual—a race on the historic IRP oval with 20 prepped Crown Victorias competing. Top alcohol dragsters were featured on both days, and you could take your own car down the strip in the sold-out Fun Run with the proper safety gear.

On the Facebook page, commentor Brian Lohnes posted, "I was able to be involved in my first Cleetus McFarland and Cars event over the last couple days and to say that this was fun as hell, impressive, massive, and invigorating would be an understatement. If you love cars, you NEED to show up to one of these events; literally nothing else like it on the planet."

So, are these types of events the future of motorsports?

In my humble opinion, it's comparable to electric cars—while I don't think they are the complete answer, they are one answer, and C&C is one form of motorsports. It's not for everybody, but there are lots of fans who attend the events, buy the swag and watch the videos.

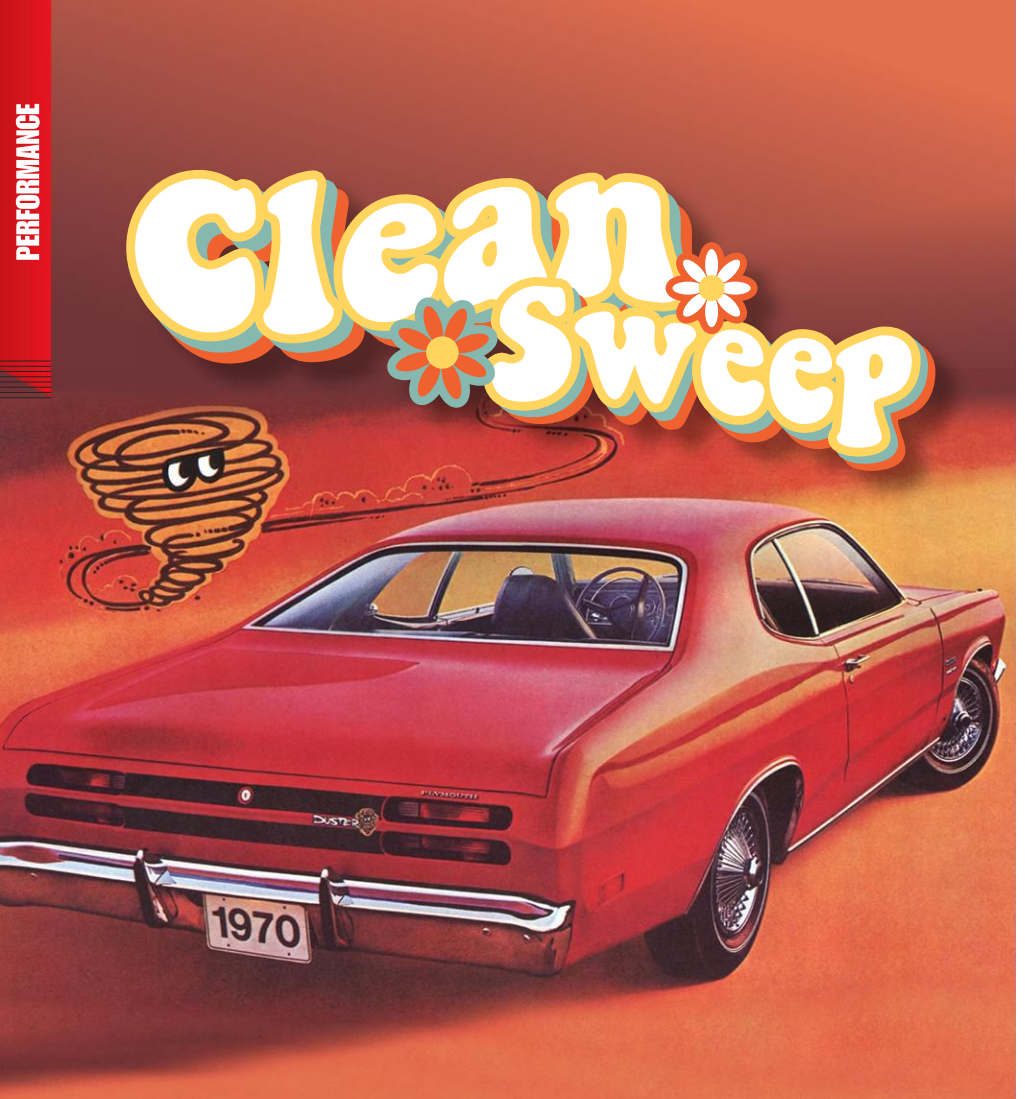
Meanwhile, an online search shows Nailbuzz puts Mitchell's net worth at around $1.7 million. Kid done good. **TS**



Born in England, ***TONY THACKER*** *is an accredited automotive journalist, author and book publisher, and served as marketing director at the famed SO-CAL Speed Shop.*



Clean Sweep



Plymouth Dusters enjoyed an immaculate seven-year run.

By James Maxwell

You can't tell the American muscle car story without a chapter on the Plymouth Duster. Fans of these striking, versatile machines have a special affinity for the iconic Mopar A-body, so let's take a look.

Gearing up for the 1970 model year, Chrysler Corp.'s Plymouth Division asked its Styling Studio to dream up something new for the marketplace that would be both exciting and done on a tight budget of $15 million. The Valiant line had been successful in the compact car segment—however it lacked a "sporty" edge, and management wanted to add something that would attract new customers.

Meanwhile, another part of the Styling Studio was already hard at work on a new product, also for 1970—a brand-new E-body Barracuda to compete in the pony car market. Plymouth management believed that a new car, placed between the boxy Valiant and the new, wider Barracuda would be in order.

The team of Gene Weiss, Neil Walling and Milt Antonick went to work on that new body style, knowing that with the limited budget it would need to be based on the standard 108-inch wheelbase of the Valiant platform.

However it was to look like something completely different and not simply a warmed-over Valiant. The new car, to be called "Duster," would retain the existing Valiant front clip (fenders, hood, front bumper and the 1970 grille design) but be restyled as a "sporty compact."

A big part of the Duster package was the Tasmanian Devil-styled logo. Plymouth designers got a lot of mileage out of the creative badging.

A SEMI-FASTBACK ROOFLINE

Inside the Studio walls an all-out effort was put into developing a full-size clay mockup that included a semi-fastback roof design, with a graceful look where the C-pillar smoothly integrated into the quarter panels.

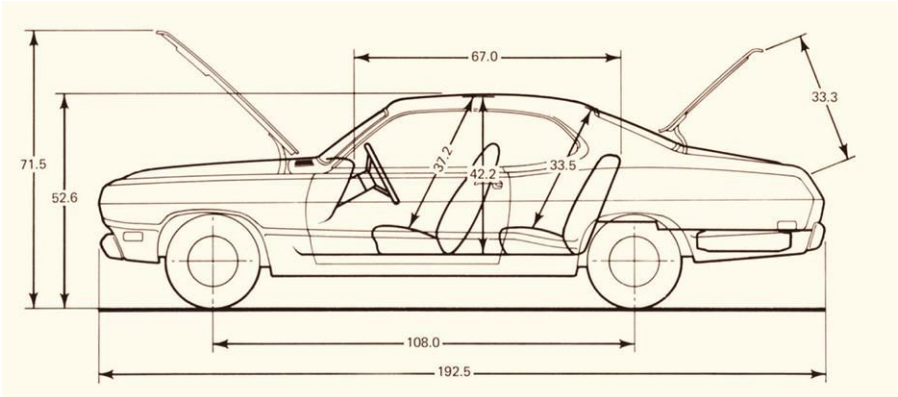
Also included was flush-mount rear glass (backlight) that dropped into a large, wide decklid. The door glass was like that of a hardtop, with no window frames.

The stylists picked up on the bodylines of the new quarter panels, adding character lines extending the full length of the car, with a kick-up over the rear wheel openings. The metal creases extended to match those of the Valiant's front fenders and door skins.

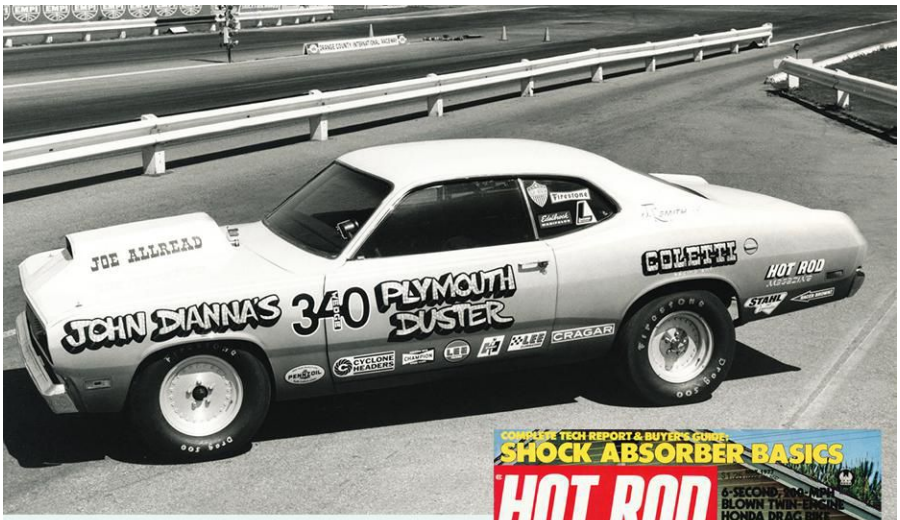
As a result of the fresh roof design and its blending into the side sheet metal, there came a need for some innovative design work from the automotive glass industry. PPG (Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co.) and Chrysler engineers got to work designing



At the 1970 NHRA U.S. Nationals, the winner of the new Pro Stock class was Herb McCandless in the Sox & Martin team car, running 9.981 seconds at 138.03 mph. It was a big victory for Plymouth, as McCandless beat another Duster driven by Arlen Vanke.



The unitized body structure of the Plymouth Duster was all-new from cowl back when compared to the Valiant line, yet retained the 108-inch wheelbase.



HOT ROD Magazine writer John Dianna built a '72 Duster with a 340-based race engine. The project car was featured in the publication.

window track mechanisms for inside the doors.

Because of the sharply curved side glass (at a 45-inch radius, as compared to the industry's previous 90-inch maximum), the curves of the glass and the narrower roof completely changed the appearance from the Valiant line.

The Duster's shape looked completely different from anything that Plymouth had offered in the past, especially when viewed from the side and rear. The curvy design above the beltline on the quarter panels provided a dramatically new, fresh and sporty flavor.

In keeping with the theme of giving the car a modernized appearance, the side glass was also now ventless, eliminating vent windows. To keep production costs down, the side quarter windows had swing-out glass for open ventilation and the windshield was laid back more than the Valiant's.



In May 1977, HOT ROD Magazine's cover celebrated the Duster as part of its "Backyard How-To" series.

Out back, Duster's rear valance layout featured vertical taillight slots without bezels, providing a clean, uncluttered appearance. If there was one minor flaw in the overall design, it was that its slightly bulging quarter panels created a visual that



Clean Sweep

RESTORED 1975 'CALIFORNIA FLASH' DUSTER

Gracing the cover of the Direct Connection Chrysler Special Parts SP6 catalog, the 1975 Butch Leal "California Flash" Duster that was built for B/Modified Production racing ran a best quarter-mile time of 9.65 seconds at 142.00 mph.

It had Hemi power (396-ci, 4.25-inch bore, 3.5-inch stroke) and was a promotional vehicle for the Mopar parts division, which thought it a great way to show off factory high-performance parts and equipment.

The car was built by Ron Butler and the body was all-steel, per NHRA rules of the day. A dual-distributor crank-trigger ignition was used, and it ran a Weiand magnesium tunnel ram intake with a pair of Holley 4500 carbs, powering a Chrysler aluminum case A-833 4-speed transmission with narrowed Dana 60 rear end.

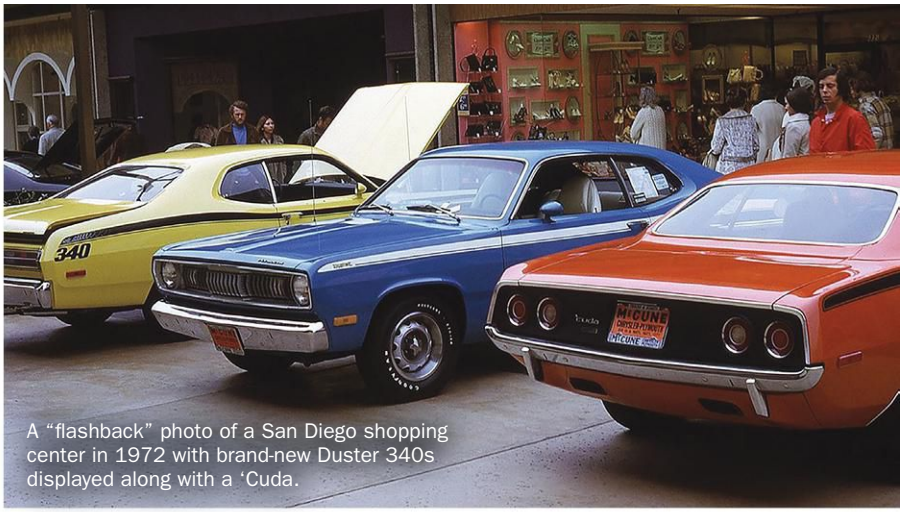
The car was found for sale on eBay and purchased by John and Denny Laube (HDK Suspension). It was recently given a full and accurate restoration back to its glory days, only this time around with a 500-ci Hemi under the hood.



Reportedly, one of the most difficult things to find for the project was a correct set of Cragar Super Trik race wheels. The overall impression takes one back to the Duster's glory days.



The restored 1975 "California Flash" Duster is a great example of a race car used as an effective promotional vehicle and celebrates Butch Leal's time with Mopar.



A "flashback" photo of a San Diego shopping center in 1972 with brand-new Duster 340s displayed along with a 'Cuda.

saw the wheels positioned in-bound by about 2 inches.

The reason was that the limited design budget didn't allow for the incorporation of a wider rear axle assembly, meaning only units sourced from the Valiant could be used. The front track of the Duster measured 57.4 inches and the rear 55.6 inches.

The first standard Dusters were offered with a variety of power plants, including 198- and 225-ci Slant Six engines, and a 318-ci, two-barrel V-8 delivering 230 hp. The standard transmission was a 3-speed, fully synchronized manual, with available automatic (3-speed Torqueflite). All ran on regular gasoline.

Meanwhile, the interior was traditional Valiant, which could be made "racier" with optional bucket seats, center console and "Tuff" three-spoke steering wheel.

A 340-CI LEGEND

A "youth-oriented" Duster 340 was marketed to the performance crowd, featuring a 4.040-inch bore, 3.310-inch stroke, 10.5:1 compression, high-flow cylinder heads (2.02-inch intake valves, 1.60-inch exhaust valves), forged crankshaft, high-performance camshaft, double-row roller timing set, windage tray, four-barrel Carter AVS carburetor (with 1.44-inch primaries and 1.69-inch secondaries) high-flow, dual-plane intake manifold, 2-1/4-inch dual exhaust, 8-3/4-inch rear end and a rating of 275 hp at 5,000 rpm.

These engines came painted Hemi Orange, and a 4-speed manual transmission with a Hurst shifter with optional Pistol Grip handle was available.

Duster 340s had front disc brakes, heavy-duty suspension (0.87-inch-diameter torsion bars, six-leaf springs in the rear), a 0.88-inch front sway bar, E70x14-inch Goodyear Polyglas rubber, 5.5-inch steel



Up front came a new grille for the 340s starting in 1971, featuring vertical bars. This particular model included the optional V3X fold-back canvas sunroof, available in conjunction with American Sunroof—an extremely rare option.





The new grille and hood pins highlighted the 1971 Duster 340, and those who wanted to do a little advertising could add bold "340" numerals at an aggressive angle with the word "Wedge" factory-adhered to the blacked-out hood.

Rallye wheels and a Rallye instrument cluster including tachometer. In addition, a flat-black grille came standard and side stripes and rear black vertical stripes were optional.

The high-revving car was described in factory promotional materials as being "the first super low-price supercar." (The term "muscle car" was not yet in use.)

When the Duster 340 was first released, Super Stock & Drag Illustrated Magazine got its hands on one equipped with a 4-speed and 3.91:1 rear gearing. On a cold dragstrip with headwinds, it scored a best run of 14.09 seconds at 99.77 mph in the quarter-mile.

Dusters were produced at four Chrysler assembly plants—Hamtramck (Michigan), Commerce (California), Fenton (Missouri) and Windsor, Ontario (Canada). The car

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had a shipping weight of 3,475 pounds and a sticker price of $3,455, making it a quick, affordable performance car.

The Tasmanian Devil tornado-like Duster logo quickly became one of the automobile industry's most recognizable markings. At mid-year, a Gold Duster premium edition arrived featuring gold stripes on the sides and rear, full wheel covers, whitewall tires and an argent painted grille. The interior featured special trim with color-keyed carpeting, bright drip moldings and pleated vinyl seats.

A special feature of the Gold Duster was a vinyl canopy top with gold-hued reptile grain, and the package became a popular option. As it turned out, the gamble to create the Duster was a big winner, as by the end of the 1970 model year run, a total of 217,192 units had been sold, making it the division's best-selling model by a wide margin.



Beth Hazelwood bought a 340 Duster new in 1974 that spent time as an NHRA Stock Eliminator racer. She named it "Kasper" after it was "lost" for a time in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.



Aftermarket components continue to feed the public's appetite for Plymouth Dusters.



Dusters have been campaigned in NHRA Stock and Super Stock classes since they were introduced and are still going strong.

TWEAKS & CHANGES

Minimal changes were made to the Duster for 1971, consisting mainly of a horsepower reduction as a result of government-mandated emissions control standards. The models looked the same except for a new, flashier Sharktooth grille standard on the 340s.

Duster 340 versions were also tweaked under the hood. A new Carter Thermo-Quad carburetor that featured 1.38-inch primaries and 2.25-inch secondaries was added, along with a breaker-less electronic ignition system.

Mid-year saw a small change on the deck lid, with a raised center added for strength in response to complaints from owners regarding denting on the deck lid from pressing down while closing. A Duster Twister model was also added—one many enthusiasts regard today as "all-show and no-go."

Wider taillights appeared in 1972, and engines were now rated by "net" and not "gross" to more realistically reflect the actual horsepower as opposed to special dynamometer-run bench engines not fitted with accessories.

To deal with the increased restrictions on emissions, engine compression dropped in 1972—the 340-ci was lowered to 8.5:1. Electronic ignition also became standard equipment on all engines.

The year also saw an additional model, the Space Duster, designed for cargo hauling with 6.5 feet of carpeted space. The expanded cargo area was made possible by an access door fitted between the cabin and the trunk cargo area, offering the ability to fold the rear seat forward.

Duster 340 ended its run in 1973, still available with a Hurst shifter-equipped 4-speed manual transmission, 3.55:1 rear gear with Sure-Grip, 14x5.5-inch Rallye

wheels wrapped with E70x14 raised white-letter tires, bucket seats and dual side mirrors. Power-assist front discs were standard.

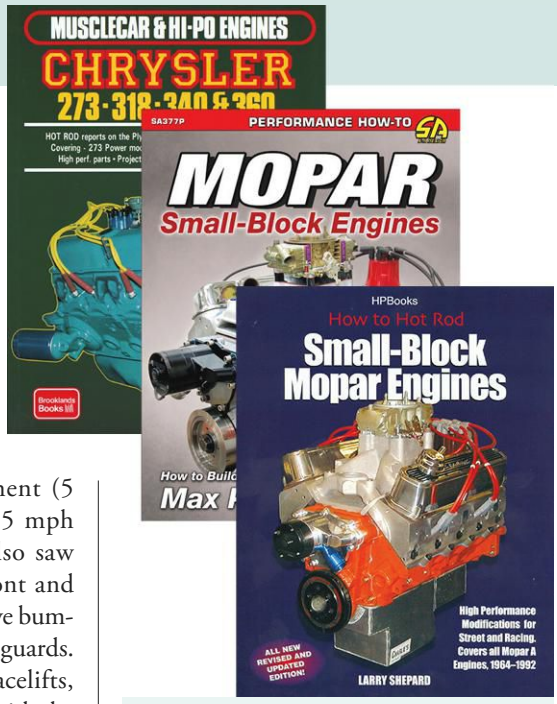
The engine, a carryover from '72 with its 8.5:1 compression ratio and smaller, 1.88-inch intake valves, was rated at 240 net horsepower at 4,800 rpm.

Because of new bumper requirements from the government (5 mph impact-absorbing front, 2.5 mph impact-absorbing rear), 1973 also saw changes made to the Duster's front and rear, featuring larger, more protective bumpers and oversized rubber bumper guards.

The hood and grille received facelifts, providing a freshened appearance with the headlights now housed in squarish-shaped bezels. Larger taillights were added to the rear.

Duster 360 replaced the previous 340 for 1974, and the extra cubic inches represented a 5-hp increase. The engine was now rated at 245 hp net.

Here's how the Plymouth marketing department described Duster's new power plant: "Our 360 high-performance engine should be especially appealing to any buffs in the crowd. It has many of the same time-tested components found in its famous predecessor, the 340. Its features include a four-barrel carburetor, shot-peened crankshaft, heavy-duty bearings, high-performance camshaft, special intake and exhaust valves (the stems of the exhaust valves are chrome plated for improved scuff resistance), high-load valve springs with surge dampers, double roller timing chain, oil pan, windage tray, slip-drive fan and dual exhaust."



Multiple books have been published over the years focusing on building Mopar small-block engines.

SLOW DOWN

High-performance was taking a hit at the time. Smog-related changes (lower compression) and stricter tailpipe emissions (less radical camshafts) were lowering horsepower numbers.

Plus, the cars became heavier with larger bumpers, side door steel crash protectors and, in the Duster's case, added soundproofing. These changes caused the weight to increase by approximately 150 pounds per vehicle.

There was a way to still have fun, however, as customers could order 4-speed manual transmissions, Hurst shifters, 3.91:1 gearing and Sure-Grip to go out and burn some rubber.

Meanwhile, disc brake-equipped Dusters for 1974 ran wheels based on the 5-on-4.5-inch bolt circle diameter, no longer using the smallish 5-on-4-inch wheels from previous A-body cars.

The 1975 Dusters were basically carried over from the previous model year with minor revisions.

This model year saw the last of the Gold Duster packages and the introduction of a new trim model, the Custom, with a distinctive interior. A base model, stripped-down Duster with a 90-hp, 225-ci Slant Six engine had a shipping weight of 2,970 pounds.

Overall, sales figures dropped to 120,131 vehicles, with 1,421 of them being the Duster 360 model, which was in its last year of production.

For 1976, a $50.56 Feather Duster option (225-ci engine) was made available, featuring numerous weight-saving modifications including an aluminum hood, bumper brackets, inner trunk, intake manifold and transmission housing on manual 4-speed A833 overdrive gearboxes that resulted in a weight savings of 187 pounds (2,975-pound shipping weight).

In addition, the special model was fitted with a 2.94:1 rear gear, recalibrated single-throat carburetor and re-curved distributor, plus low-restrictive exhaust system. The estimated fuel mileage was advertised at 36 mpg highway, 24 mpg city.

This year also marked the introduction of an all-new model, the Volaŕe, which was sold alongside the Duster, now in its final year of production. The 225-ci Slant Six and 318-ci power plants continued, and while the Duster 360 package was no longer offered, the 360-ci engine itself could be ordered for an additional $392, automatic transmission only.

The basic Duster and a Silver Duster with unique side and deck striping were available. Overall Duster sales dropped to 34,581 units and it was clear its time was near an end.

Reflecting years later, one of the original Plymouth Studio stylists, Fred Schimmel, had this summary of the Duster from the perspective of its sales history:

"The Duster had proven very successful, just taking a very boxy-looking Valiant, the way that it was able to make a more flowing shape out of what had been a fairly boxy design, seemed to be well-liked. The public was buying Dusters quite well."

Considering the design work for the Duster was done over just six weeks, and at the time was most likely considered a long shot as it was basically just a warmed-over Valiant in many aspects, there's no question the design was an overwhelming success during its seven-year run.

DEDICATED FOLLOWING

Total Duster sales from 1970-76 were 1,332,846 units. If you add in another 322,319 sales of 1971-76 Dodge Demon/Sport variants, you arrive at a grand total of 1,655,165.

Today, the Duster body can make a formidable street machine, as there are loads of aftermarket parts and equipment available. New Mopar crate engines also fit into the engine compartments with ease.

Builders can update the factory front suspension systems (replacing the torsion bars) and, when combined with larger brakes and low-profile rubber, these cars can be made to handle, corner and stop with modern efficiency. ***TS***

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2023 Camaro Supercharger Kits

ProCharger, Lenexa, Kansas, offers a pair of Supercharger Kits for 2023 Chevrolet Camaro applications. The HO intercooled supercharger system produces gains of 150 hp with 7 psi of boost and pump gas. It features a robust billet bracket design that utilizes strategic mounting points on the LT1 engine for maximum bracket strength and integrity. Meanwhile, the Stage II system is the same as the HO, except it has a larger intercooler and yields 170-plus hp at the same boost level.



Turbodiesel Truck Electric Fan Conversions

Flex-A-Lite, Burlington, Washington, presents Electric Fan Conversion Systems for popular Ford Super Duty and Ram turbodiesel trucks that are shown to significantly improve rear-wheel horsepower and fuel economy. Designed to replace the heavy factory clutch fan, the systems provide faster engine warm-up times and improved air conditioning performance, especially at idle and slow vehicle speeds. A provision for a manual override switch is included.

Car Stereo



Custom Autosound Mfg., Fullerton, California, presents the USA-630 car stereo created to provide quality audio performance wrapped in a classic appearance. Designed to fit stock car or truck dashes without modifications, the system features a bezel containing the vehicle manufacturer's logo as well as large OEM-style pushbuttons. Modern highlights include a USB input for flash drives to play MP3/WMA song files and an iPod dock. When connected to a device, the digital display will show artist, song and album title, with song navigation possible.



GM Truck Climate Control

Vintage Air, San Antonio, presents an all-new Gen 5 SureFit Climate-Control System for 1988-94 GM C/K trucks and select SUVs. The SureFit Kits showcase the all-new Gen 5 electronically controlled climate control system featuring OEM-quality injection-molded cases and block-type expansion valves. They are designed for trucks and SUVs originally equipped with factory A/C and are available as either a Complete Kit or an Evaporator Kit. Both install with minimal modifications to the original firewall and are made in the USA.



Carbon Fiber LS Valve Covers

Performance Design, Troy, Michigan, presents all-new Carbon Fiber Valve Covers for center-bolt LS engines that combine styling and space for aftermarket rocker arms. Features include bolt retention, use of GM production gaskets, robust PCV and positive locators to keep the covers on the head prior to bolt fastening. The covers are solid carbon fiber throughout, molded with an advanced high-temp, pre-preg resin system, while an undercut inboard wall provides clearance for most aftermarket or race rockers. A large PCV baffling system aids in air removal.

Nissan Frontier Exhaust System



BORLA Performance Industries, Johnson City, Tennessee, presents its Cat-Back Exhaust System for 2022-23 Nissan Frontier models that improves horsepower and torque. System 140919BC delivers the classic BORLA S-Type sound without any drone or resonance inside the vehicle. The system is made from T-304 stainless steel and features all-welded construction for durability and long life. System 140919 with bright chrome on T-304 stainless steel tips is also available.



Off-Road Clutch & Flywheel Kits

McLeod Racing, Anaheim, California, presents its new line of Clutch Kits for the trail-ready, daily-driven truck and off-road market. Offering reliable off-road performance on vehicles with bigger tires or more power, the kits include a matched pressure plate and steel-backed disc that work together to provide smooth, positive engagement and increased clamping force, along with a throw-out bearing and pilot bushing where applicable, plus an alignment tool. Choose from Trail Level, Trail Pro, Super Trail Pro and Trail Extreme models, plus flywheel.

EFI System



Holley, Bowling Green, Kentucky, introduces the Sniper 2 Electronic Fuel Injection System, a self-tuning, easy-to-install EFI conversion for common 4-barrel-style carburetors. Designed to work with the Sniper Ecosystem that includes Hyperspark ignition, complete fuel systems, multiple user interfaces/dash displays and more, Sniper 2 includes an optional Power Distribution Module (PDM) that isolates the core of the EFI and ignition wiring into one, easy-to-use location.



Assembly Lubricant

Hot Shot's Secret, Mt. Gilead, Ohio, introduces Adrenaline Assembly Lubricant. The corrosion-resistant lubricant offers extreme dry-start protection and a strong, tacky adherence to parts. Engineered to provide optimal performance during initial assembly, the lube is formulated to blend 100% with any commercially available break-in oil. It provides a noticeably long-lasting coating that clings to metal surfaces through the initial startup process and adds lubricity to engine parts including camshafts, bearings, valvetrain components and fasteners.

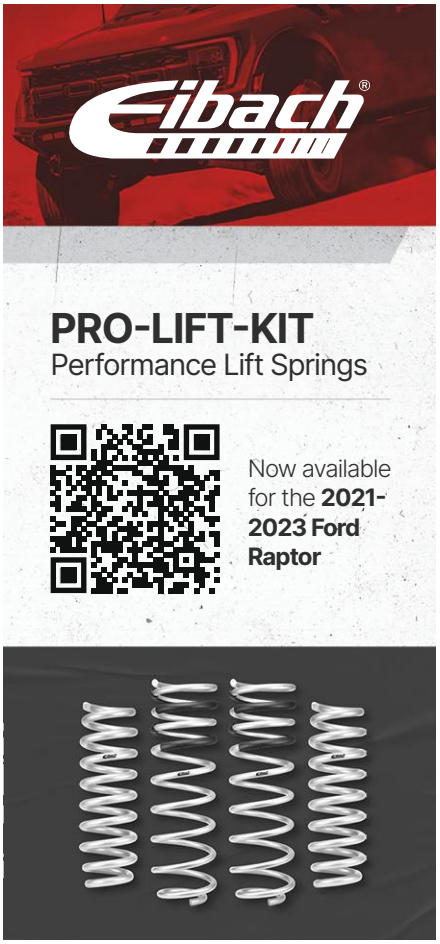
Air Intake Systems



K&N Engineering, Riverside, California, presents more than 50 new Air Intake Systems, with both Dryflow synthetic and oiled cotton options in new and top-selling applications. The systems are designed to give builders and consumers more choices when selecting the right intake for their project. The company is also bringing back discontinued SKUs to offer additional options for less-popular vehicles. ***TS***

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Cars at the Capital





A 1937 Cord 812 Convertible Phaeton Sedan Chassis No. 1714 once owned by Amelia Earhart (front) and a 1952 Porsche America Roadster (Type 540) are the 33rd and 34th vehicles to be added to the National Historic Vehicle Register.

It's automotive history under glass.

The Hagerty Drivers Foundation hosted its annual Cars at the Capital exhibition in September on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

The 33rd and 34th vehicles to be added to the National Historic Vehicle Register—a 1937 Cord 812 Convertible Phaeton Sedan Chassis No. 1714 and a 1952 Porsche America Roadster (Type 540)—were displayed in a brightly lit glass enclosure between the Smithsonian National Museum of American History and the United States Department of Agriculture.

The free pop-up exhibit is put on by the Foundation each year to educate the public about the cultural significance of the automobile and its role in shaping modern society.

The Cord, which was displayed from Aug. 31-Sept. 5, was once owned by Amelia Earhart, who acquired the 812 Phaeton less than a year before she, navigator Fred Noonan and her Lockheed 10E Electra disappeared over the South Pacific in 1937.

In September 1936, Earhart was famously photographed standing with both the Cord and the airplane she would ultimately take on her final flight.

The vehicle is now owned by The JBS Collection and was restored by LaVine Restorations Inc.

Displayed from Sept. 6-11, the Type 540 was one of Porsche's first factory-built race cars. It picked up the "America Roadster" nickname because the model was conceived thanks to the influence of John von Neumann and Max Hoffman for the U.S. market.

Neumann's stepdaughter Josie raced the America Roadster after he sold it to entrepreneur John Crean, and it's said the vehicle and the team's influence helped launch Porsche's success and longstanding heritage as a competition leader in the U.S.

The display vehicle is owned by The Ingram Collection and was restored by Road Scholars.

During the display period, the Hagerty Drivers Foundation also hosted two Cars at the Capital Family Festival Days. Located around the glass enclosure on the National Mall, festivities included a tire changing station, an activity book focused on cars in the National Historic Vehicle Register, and a free play table with a track and vehicles.

With a stated purpose of "shaping the future of car culture while celebrating our automotive past," the Hagerty Drivers Foundation provides scholarships for students in the automotive field of education, as well as those seeking formal driver education training.

It also continues to build the federally recognized National Historic Vehicle Register program that documents and records automotive history. **TS**

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