

OCTOBER 2026

THE SHOP

For performance, restyling & customization professionals

PRECISION
ENGINE

EVERYTHING
IN ITS
PLACE

Toolboxes & cargo carriers
add utility, efficiency
to any vehicle

SEMA SHOW
PREVIEW



PERFORMANCE COOLING

THESHOPMAG.COM

KEEP MORE OF EVERY SALE

Reduce your credit card processing fees

North™

**SWITCH
NOW!
get a
FREE
TERMINAL***



Smart
Terminal



Standard
Terminal



Accept EMV/NFC
(Apple Pay, etc.)



Online Payment
Gateways Available



Next Day
Funding

"We were losing thousands of dollars every year in hidden processing fees. The transition was seamless and we saw savings in the first month."

PRICING PROGRAM 1

Rates as Low as
0.05%*
Wholesale Pricing

OR

PRICING PROGRAM 2

**Accept Credit Cards
Without Paying
Processing Fees***

Edge program only from North is a true
dual pricing program combining
Flat Rate Pricing with Cash Discount.

- ✓ No setup fees
- ✓ Chip card & contactless payment acceptance (Apple Pay, etc.)
- ✓ Seamless integration with your current POS system**
- ✓ One-time & recurring invoices that you can upload in bulk**
- ✓ Payment Links available
- ✓ \$295 towards any early termination fees**
- ✓ A secure online merchant portal
- ✓ Access to multiple online payment gateways
- ✓ Free printer paper, & more*

**COMPATIBLE
with GAS CARDS**



- ✓ Wright Express
- ✓ Fleet Cards
- ✓ Voyager
- ✓ and More...



SAVE MONEY using a Direct Processor!

Go North. Call Today
866.481.4604

North
nynorth.com

©2026 North is a registered DBA of NorthAB, LLC. All rights reserved. NorthAB, LLC is a registered ISO of BMO Harris Bank N.A., Chicago, IL, Citizens Bank N.A., Providence, RI, The Bancorp Bank, Philadelphia, PA, and FFB Bank, Fresno, CA. *Merchant Classification restrictions apply. Dual signage pricing required. Other fees may apply. Contact North for more details. **Some restrictions apply. Merchant agreement required. Hardware is free for use while processing and must be returned upon termination of merchant agreement. Other fees may apply. Contact 866.481.4604 for details.

KEEP MORE OF EVERY SALE

Reduce your credit card processing fees

North™

**SWITCH
NOW!
get a
FREE
TERMINAL***



Smart
Terminal



Standard
Terminal



Accept EMV/NFC
(Apple Pay, etc.)



Online Payment
Gateways Available



Next Day
Funding

"We were losing thousands of dollars every year in hidden processing fees. The transition was seamless and we saw savings in the first month."

PRICING PROGRAM 1

Rates as Low as
0.05%*
Wholesale Pricing

OR

PRICING PROGRAM 2

**Accept Credit Cards
Without Paying
Processing Fees***

Edge program only from North is a true
dual pricing program combining
Flat Rate Pricing with Cash Discount.

- ✓ No setup fees
- ✓ Chip card & contactless payment acceptance (Apple Pay, etc.)
- ✓ Seamless integration with your current POS system**
- ✓ One-time & recurring invoices that you can upload in bulk**
- ✓ Payment Links available
- ✓ \$295 towards any early termination fees**
- ✓ A secure online merchant portal
- ✓ Access to multiple online payment gateways
- ✓ Free printer paper, & more*

**COMPATIBLE
with GAS CARDS**



- ✓ Wright Express
- ✓ Fleet Cards
- ✓ Voyager
- ✓ and More...



SAVE MONEY using a Direct Processor!

Go North. Call Today
866.481.4604

North
nynorth.com

©2026 North is a registered DBA of NorthAB, LLC. All rights reserved. NorthAB, LLC is a registered ISO of BMO Harris Bank N.A., Chicago, IL, Citizens Bank N.A., Providence, RI, The Bancorp Bank, Philadelphia, PA, and FFB Bank, Fresno, CA. *Merchant Classification restrictions apply. Dual signage pricing required. Other fees may apply. Contact North for more details. **Some restrictions apply. Merchant agreement required. Hardware is free for use while processing and must be returned upon termination of merchant agreement. Other fees may apply. Contact 866.481.4604 for details.

Boost Your Car Count. Boost Your Reputation. Boost Your Business.



A Brand
in Demand



Expansive Product &
Package Selection



Pain-Free
Logistics



Increase Sales
per Ticket



Personalized
Marketing
Support



Learn more about
installing AMSOIL
products at your shop.



READY FOR ADVENTURE



>Gravity Titan



>Flex Era



>Gravity Pro6



LED Light Bars

Light bars are one of the most impactful upgrades you can make to an off-road build. Whether you're going minimal with a compact bar or running the full overhead setup, there's a KC option that fits the vision.



Meyer Distributing is a complete international wholesale distributor specializing in Automotive, RV, Powersports, Towing products and more! With over 1000 product lines, Meyer has a large inventory of parts to service their customers. With strategically positioned warehouse facilities, Meyer Distributing can offer next-day delivery to most locations.

MEYERDISTRIBUTING.COM | 800.639.3787



CONTENTS

THE SHOP // October 2026 // Volume 29 Number 5

FEATURES

BUSINESS

PAGE
6

IT'S SEMA

SHOW
TIME

What to expect at the industry's annual trade show in Las Vegas.

PERFORMANCE

16 EVERYTHING'S COOL

The proper performance cooling systems & components make every drive or race better.

By John Carollo

24 POWER FROM FRONT TO BACK

Performance drivetrain products create a real connection in any build.

By Jef White

32 SOARING TO NEW HEIGHTS

Hawks Performance focuses on GM F-body performance, restoration & customization.

By Maura Keller

38 PERFORMANCE PRODUCTS

Stock your shelves with these go-fast components.

PRECISION ENGINE

40 PERFORMANCE ENGINE ASSEMBLY TIPS

Everyone has to start somewhere, so here are some initial focus areas.

By Mike Mavrigian

46 90 YEARS OF STROMBERG CARBURETORS

The old-school hot rodding company's famous 97 carbs are now just the beginning.

By Tony Thacker

48 PRECISION ENGINE PRODUCTS

Under-hood goodies for engine builders & speed shops.

RESTYLING

50 EVERYTHING IN ITS PLACE

Toolboxes & cargo carriers help make any vehicle more efficient.

By Jef White

58 THE TRAILS ARE CALLING

Reports: Off-road culture & trends continue to drive consumer spending.

64 TAKING CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS TO NEW HEIGHTS

Building strong client connections requires constant consideration & care.

By Josh Poulson

68 STILL SKY HIGH

How aftermarket sunroofs continue to drive profits for dealers & restylers.

By Dino Perfetti

70 RESTYLING PRODUCTS

Parts to accessorize any ride.

PAGE
58



ON THE COVER

From securing equipment in a truck bed to supporting bags of groceries and sports gear in the family SUV, there's a storage solution to fit any vehicle and any driver. See article on page 50.

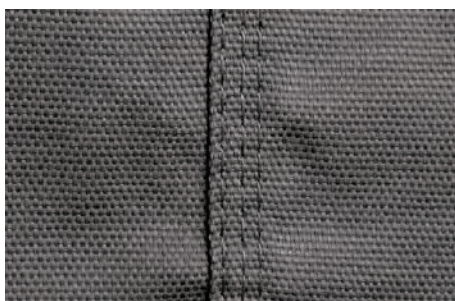
(Main photo courtesy Westin Automotive; inset photo courtesy Mishimoto)

DEPARTMENTS

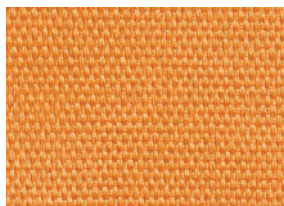
DRIVER'S SEAT.....	4
AFTERMARKET ALLEY.....	72
AD INDEX.....	75
ONE MORE THING.....	76



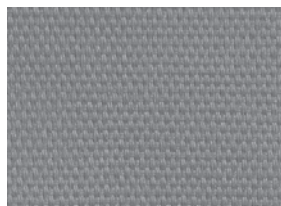
**Extremely Strong Overlapped
Triple-Stitched Seams**



Spacious Storage Pockets



Carhartt® Brown



Carhartt® Gravel



Mossy Oak®

PROTECTING THE THINGS THAT MOVE YOU



Jef White
Editor in Chief
theshopmag.com

More Drivers Are Happy With Their New Vehicles

New-vehicle owners are feeling more excitement behind the wheel as automakers deliver cars, trucks, SUVs and crossovers that are more satisfying to own and drive. An important pillar of aftermarket success, drivers' current happiness with the latest vehicle releases was confirmed through the JD Power 2026 U.S. Automotive Performance, Execution and Layout (APEAL) Study.

Findings show that overall satisfaction among new-vehicle owners had reached a score of 858 out of 1,000, rising 7 index points for a third consecutive annual increase. This year's gain is the largest since 2018 and the fifth largest in study history, with APEAL officials attributing the rise to improvements in quality and vehicle

experience translating into stronger owner enthusiasm.

"Automakers have made real progress in reducing problems, but JD Power data makes it clear that quality alone isn't enough," says Frank Hanley, senior director of auto benchmarking at JD Power. "Owners are most enthusiastic when their vehicle not only works reliably but also feels thoughtfully designed and offers comfortable interiors, useful storage and technology that's easy to live with. The brands that get both sides of that equation right see the strongest advocacy from their customers."

The APEAL Study asks owners to consider 37 attributes, ranging from the sense of comfort they feel when climbing into the driver's seat to their exhilaration when they step on the accelerator. The APEAL dataset allows automakers to immediately identify the specific features, driving characteristics and styling cues that are resonating most and helping to drive brand loyalty among new-vehicle buyers.

The 2026 U.S. APEAL Study is based on responses from 78,514 owners of new 2026 model-year vehicles who were surveyed after 90 days of ownership. Key findings include:

- **Interior improvements drive the biggest gains in the ownership experience:** Nearly every category improves year over year, with interior posting the largest increase (plus-11 points). Owners are responding positively to more functional storage solutions, including better cupholders, phone placement and center console design. Gains in exterior styling and ease of getting in and out (plus-10 points each) highlight the growing importance of everyday usability.
- **Even with the gains, new models are delivering less of a "wow" factor:** For a fifth consecutive year, newly launched models perform similarly to their carryover counterparts, scoring just 2 index points higher overall. New premium models perform 3 index points below carryover models, while new mass market models outperform carryover models by 12 points. Challenges with infotainment systems, vehicle setup and technology features continue to dampen owner satisfaction, suggesting that many new models are not delivering the visceral excitement owners expect.
- **The gap between premium and mass-market brands continues to narrow:** The emotional satisfaction gap between premium (excluding Tesla) and mass-market brands has shrunk to just 29 points, down from 66 points in 2008, as mass-market vehicles continue to close the gap on features that once set premium models apart. Premium vehicles no longer hold outsized advantages in areas such as infotainment, exterior, driver-assistance systems, headlight performance and door-closing sound, suggesting owners increasingly define a premium ownership experience by overall execution rather than brand alone.
- **Battery electric vehicles (BEVs) posted the biggest gains in owner affinity:** While overall APEAL index scores improved across every powertrain type this year, BEVs have seen the largest year-over-year increase (plus-22 points). BEVs outperform internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles in nearly every category in APEAL, with the biggest advantage in powertrain satisfaction (plus-109 points).

When it comes to the highest-ranking carmakers, Porsche is tops among premium brands for a third consecutive year and is the only brand to rank above the segment average, with a score of 896. Meanwhile, MINI ranks highest among mass-market brands for a third consecutive year, with a score of 875. Hyundai (858) is second and Kia (857) third.

View the complete visual rank charts for each segment at: jdpower.com/pr-id/2026067. **TS**

THE SHOP

EDITORIAL

EDITOR IN CHIEF: Jef White
jwhite@cahabamedia.com

MANAGING EDITOR: Chris Main
cmain@cahabamedia.com

EXECUTIVE EDITOR: Jennifer King
jdking@cahabamedia.com

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: John Carollo,
Maura Keller, Mike Mavrigian, Dino Perfetti,
Josh Poulson, Tony Thacker

CREATIVE SERVICES

ART DIRECTOR: Elizabeth Chick

DIGITAL PROJECT MANAGER: Greg Ragsdale

WEB DEVELOPER: Greg Caudle

CIRCULATION

SUBSCRIPTION CHANGES & INQUIRIES:
customercare@cahabamedia.com

ADVERTISING

**SENIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
WEST COAST**
Krystal Franklin
kfranklin@cahabamedia.com

**ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
EAST COAST**
Luke LaValle
llavalle@cahabamedia.com

CLIENT SERVICES COORDINATOR:
Holly Strickland
hstrickland@cahabamedia.com

**CAHABA
MEDIA GROUP**

PUBLISHER: Matthew G. Conroy

VP OF FINANCE: Brandon Whittemore

DIRECTOR OF CONTENT: Elizabeth Manning

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS: Laurie Tisdale

DIRECTOR OF SALES: Stacy Marshall

P.O. Box 530067
Birmingham, AL 35253



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, P.O. 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 29 ISSUE 5

FUELLING PASSION



**WE OFFER THE
FULL LINE OF**



FOR OVER 60 YEARS, MOTOR STATE DISTRIBUTING HAS FUELED THE PASSION OF RACERS. AT ITS CORE, RACING AND THE PARTS THAT SUPPORT THE RACING INDUSTRY HAVE BEEN AT THE HEART OF WHAT WE DO. SINCE 1964, OUR FOUNDER, GEORGE LANE, UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS WAS MORE THAN JUST A BUSINESS; IT'S ABOUT PASSION.



WWW.MOTORSTATE.COM

800.772.2678

@MOTORSTATEDISTRIBUTING

IT'S SEMA SHOW TIME

Showcasing the innovation & passion that drives the specialty automotive aftermarket.

Set for Nov. 3-6 in Las Vegas, the SEMA Show showcases the innovation and passion that drives the specialty automotive aftermarket. (Photo by Jef White)



An expanded SEMA Show is right around the corner, bringing aftermarket networking opportunities, product demonstrations and education sessions to shop owners and industry professionals. Set for Nov. 3-6 in Las Vegas, the annual event—produced by the Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA)—showcases the innovation and passion that drives the specialty automotive aftermarket.

Celebrity appearances, special vehicle reveals and popular competitions such as Battle of the Builders and the PRO Cup Challenge will return this year, along with the Friday program that allows some con-

sumer presence in the exhibit halls and the closeout SEMA Fest car show and concert Friday night.

Among the debuts is a new dedicated powersports section that helps expand the show's off-road segment to include UTVs, dirt bikes and adventure lifestyle gear.

"The SEMA Show is where the industry comes to see what's next and experience innovation firsthand," says Tom Gattuso, SEMA vice president of events. "This is the only place to see the products and technologies that will define the aftermarket landscape over the next five years."

The floor plan spans the full spectrum of specialty equipment, from performance and

racing to trucks, SUVs and off-road, powersports, accessories, tools and equipment, and emerging technologies.

A PLACE FOR POWERSPORTS

The show's West Hall will undergo a transformation to bring a new Powersports/SxS/Lifestyle section to join the usual truck and off-road displays. Show officials say the space creates a unified home for the rapidly growing intersection of the automotive and powersports communities.

"This expansion is a bold step forward in SEMA's mission to serve the entire enthusiast ecosystem," says Gattuso. "Powersports has always been an integral part of

DRIVERS, START YOUR ENGINES!

JOIN US AT
SEMA
SHOW

BOOTH #
58097
WEST HALL



RANDYS

RANDYSWORLDWIDE.COM | 1-800-347-1188

SUSPENSION | DRIVETRAIN | TOWING | WHEELS | REMANUFACTURING

An expanded SEMA Show is right around the corner, bringing aftermarket networking opportunities, product demonstrations and education sessions to shop owners and industry professionals. (Photo by Jef White)



The show's West Hall will undergo a transformation to bring a new, dedicated Powersports/SxS/Lifestyle section to join the usual truck and off-road displays. (Photo by Jef White)

SEMA's DNA, and we are now providing this community with the dedicated platform it deserves. By integrating powersports and related lifestyle products into our show floor, we are creating a more powerful, unified resource for the aftermarket. This move celebrates the natural synergy between automotive and outdoor recreation, ensuring our members have the advocacy, resources and product discovery platform they need to thrive in a modern, evolving market."

Utilizing a layout designed for long-term growth, and with the West Hall's unique access to adjacent parking lots for dynamic outdoor activations and vehicle demonstrations, the powersports section reflects a "total package approach" with categories including:

- Motorcycles & dirt bikes
- Side-by-sides & UTVs
- Trailers & tow vehicles
- Adventure lifestyle gear & accessories

"Attendees can expect an immersive and highly interactive experience that mirrors how they actually live and work," says Andy Tompkins, SEMA trade show director. "By grouping powersports and lifestyle gear

alongside our world-class truck and off-road sections, we are providing an unmatched opportunity to see the latest in the adventure market."

The association's membership has a strong presence in the powersports sector. According to SEMA Research, 60% of specialty equipment manufacturers already produce products for at least one type of powersports or recreational vehicle, while 47% of retailers and installers sell to those segments.

Beyond the show floor, SEMA's recent acquisition of the Off-Road Business Association (ORBA) has strengthened its presence in Washington, D.C., and Sacramento, California, to fight for land-use protection and motorized recreation access.

OEMS & OTHERS

Show officials predict strong participation from major automakers and performance organizations, reinforcing the event's role as the global meeting place where OEM and aftermarket innovation intersect.

Participating OEMs for 2026 include Ford Motor Company, Honda Racing Corp. (Honda/Acura), Mitsubishi, Nissan, Stellantis (with representation from Dodge, Jeep and Mopar), and Toyota North America.

"The enthusiast community is central to Ford Motor Company," says Matt Simpson, Ford customization executive director. "We are a passion brand in every segment that we participate in. And the way we win with our audience is to meet them where they are, and they're at SEMA. We are thrilled this year to increase our investment and presence at SEMA to show off what we're working on, from our latest Ford Custom Garage offerings to our growing Ford Racing Parts



The FutureTech Studio area offers a forward-looking window into advanced vehicle technologies and ideas influencing the aftermarket. (Photo courtesy SEMA)



OEM participation fuels the show's role as the global meeting place where carmakers and aftermarket innovation intersect. (Photos by Jef White)

business and our heritage crate engines."

This year, Ford will engage SEMA enthusiasts on new levels, he says, with opportunities to interact with the company.



APEX™ WHEEL SERVICE. BUILT SMART. PRICED RIGHT.

APEX by BendPak delivers dependable wheel service performance built for daily shop use, with tire changers that provide consistent clamping, smooth bead breaking, and controlled operation, paired with wheel balancers engineered for accurate, repeatable measurements and fast cycle times. Every APEX wheel service machine is designed for stability, precision, and durability, giving technicians reliable results vehicle after vehicle without unnecessary complexity or wasted features.

NEW

AB24M

MANUAL
WHEEL BALANCER
SKU 5140353
\$1,250*



AT26

TIRE CHANGER
SKU 5140351
\$3,195*



AT26A

TIRE CHANGER
SKU 5140350
\$3,595*

Wheel not included.

AB28

WHEEL BALANCER
SKU 5140352
\$2,695*



SEMA
SHOW

CHECK NOV. 3-6, 2026
US OUT! LAS VEGAS, NV

Indoor Booth

#36129

Upper South Hall

FREE SHIPPING**



**SHOP
NOW**

BENDPAK.COM/APEX ♦ 1-800-253-2363

©2026 BendPak Inc. All rights reserved. *Price valid thru December 31, 2026. **Free shipping to direct shipping points within the 48 contiguous United States only. · TS3/26



The SEMA Show's New Products Showcase features the latest launches and solutions across categories. (Photo courtesy SEMA)

"We invite attendees to visit our booth to connect with our team and partners, and to see firsthand how we are bringing vehicle customization to the masses at an impressive scale," says Simpson.

Other highlights include the return of the popular New Products Showcase featuring the latest launches and solutions across categories, and the FutureTech Studio, which presents a forward-looking window into advanced vehicle technologies and ideas influencing what comes next for the aftermarket.

"Show attendees are going to feel the

momentum the moment they hit the halls: more product discovery, more hands-on experiences and a layout that makes it easy to navigate and find the solutions they came for," says Tompkins. "Whether you're here to source new products, meet with suppliers or see the industry's best builds and latest tech, 2026 is set up to deliver a week that's productive, energizing and inspiring."

SEMA FEST

The SEMA Show wraps up Friday evening with SEMA Fest, an outdoor celebration featuring exhibits, vehicles from the show floor and a concert near the West Hall. This year's musical lineup includes The Offspring, Jimmy Eat World, 311 and The Alive.

Billed as the "ultimate intersection of high-octane and high-decibels—a one-day celebration of the long-standing bond between music and car culture," general admission and VIP concert access tickets are available for SEMA Fest, as are combined tickets offering entry into both SEMA Fest and SEMA Show Friday public access.

"SEMA Fest represents where our industry is headed, at the crossroads of innovation, lifestyle and cultural relevance," says Gattuso. "By bringing together the world's premier automotive gathering with iconic music, immersive automotive experiences and enthusiast access, we are creating a powerful platform that expands the reach of

car culture, strengthens engagement with new audiences and sends SEMA Week out on a high-energy, high-impact note."

SEMA Fest serves as the official "closing ceremony" of SEMA Week, transforming the trade show into a massive public celebration and extending the energy of the SEMA Show into a day-long experience.

Highlights include automotive-related exhibitions including drifting demonstrations from OPTIMA and the high-energy Globe of Death. Supercar Saturdays Florida also returns to SEMA Fest with a curated showcase of rare hypercars and exotic vehicles following its 2025 debut.

AAPEX

Held concurrently with the SEMA Show at The Venetian Expo and Convention Center, the Automotive Aftermarket Products Expo (AAPEX) unites the more than \$2.3 trillion global automotive aftermarket industry and historically draws around 2,500 exhibiting companies from around the globe.

Industry buyers include automotive service and repair professionals, auto parts retailers, independent warehouse distributors, program groups, service chains, automotive dealers, fleet buyers and engine builders.

For 2026, AAPEX is rolling out an improved floor plan for its exhibit halls and the all-new AAPEX Forum, which optimizes the show's



The SEMA Show wraps up Friday evening with SEMA Fest, featuring exhibits, show vehicles and a concert near the West Hall. (Photo courtesy SEMA)



**ACT GR86 & SUBARU BRZ SFI-APPROVED
SINGLE CLUTCH KIT FOR:**

**2022-2026 TOYOTA GR86 & SUBARU BRZ
2.4L (FA24D) 6-SPEED**

**TORQUE CAPACITY
366-556 FT/LBS**

SEARCH FOR SB14/SB15/SB16 CLUTCH KITS



206 EAST AVE K4, LANCASTER CA 93535
ADVANCEDCLUTCH.COM | 661-940-7555





The Automotive Aftermarket Products Expo (AAPEX) offers exhibits and training for auto service and repair professionals, auto parts retailers, automotive dealers, fleet buyers and engine builders. (Photo courtesy AAPEX)

exhibitor segmentation capacity and was first introduced last year.

Traditionally, exhibitor booths were segmented by one of a dozen overarching product or service categories; however, some supplementary sections were needed to carry an overflow of exhibitors, according to show officials.

"The new layout was well-received among attendees; AAPEX earned the highest net promoter score (NPS), a standard measure of customer satisfaction, that it's ever received following last year's show," says Liz Goad, MEMA Aftermarket Suppliers vice president of events. "AAPEX strives for continuous improvement, and we have worked with exhibitors and buyers alike to create a plan that's easy to navigate and fosters a high-energy business atmosphere."

The AAPEX Forum is a building adjacent to The Venetian Convention Center.

Meanwhile, Joe's Garage is moving to Level 2 of The Venetian Expo this year. The area is a hallmark exhibit space that features six

fully operational vehicle service bays that are used for hands-on auto technician training and new product demonstrations.

AAPEX also announced multiple celebrity guest appearances throughout the show, which runs Tuesday-Thursday, Nov. 3-5. Sports figures Mia Hamm, Jimmie Johnson, Barry Sanders, Grant Hill and Randy Johnson are among those scheduled to participate in photo opportunities and sign autographs.

"We've put a lot of effort into improving the business benefits of AAPEX for exhibitors and attendees over the years: informative sessions; high-quality, hands-on training; and a better-organized exhibit hall layout that benefits both exhibitors and attendees," says Mark Bogdansk, Auto Care Association vice president of trade shows and community engagement. "This year, we are taking things a step further with a variety of entertainment activities, including inviting several major celebrities to the show."

Famed basketball coach Mike Krzyzewski will be the headline speaker at the AAPEX 2026 Keynote Breakfast.



AAPEX has announced multiple celebrity guest appearances throughout the show, which runs Tuesday-Thursday, Nov. 3-5, at The Venetian Expo Center. (Photo courtesy AAPEX)

"A common theme between these celebrities and the automotive aftermarket is that they are all competitors who found a way to win," says Goad. "Automotive aftermarket professionals have good reason to attend the show for business purposes, but we're still aiming to improve the experience every year."

SEMA Show attendees can use their valid 2026 entry badge to also enter AAPEX.

DISC BRAKES wilwood



TX6/4R-DM Big Brake Kits provide unmatched braking capacity for high-demand towing, hauling, off-roading or highway driving

TOWING



TX6/4R-DM

BIG BRAKE KITS

Front and rear kits are engineered and rigorously tested to ensure repeatable performance.

wilwood.com

805.388.1188



DISC BRAKES
wilwood
ESTABLISHED 1977

SEMA HALL OF FAME

In May, SEMA announced its Hall of Fame Class of 2026, recognizing four industry icons who have influenced and inspired the \$52.6 billion automotive specialty equipment industry. The Hall of Fame inductees are Doug Dwyer, Jay Leno, Ellen McKoy and Dennis Overholser.

“These four individuals have poured their time, talent and passion into building this industry. Their contributions have shaped what the aftermarket is today, and we’re proud to recognize the impact they’ve made, both on the businesses they’ve led and on the people who have been lucky enough to cross their path,” says Mike Spagnola, SEMA CEO.

Here are their provided bios:



DOUG DWYER

With a career spanning 60 years across wheels and tires, motorsports marketing, media strategy and brand development, Dwyer’s industry contributions reflect a rare combination of technical insight, professional integrity and service to others. He started his career working for Carroll Shelby Enterprises/Goodyear Racing

Tires at age 16, served in the Army and went on to build a strong leadership career at Appliance Industries, Weld Wheels and TrueSpoke Wire Wheels. As a partner in Bryson Dwyer Inc., he continued to strengthen professional standards and build lasting brand identities, always emphasizing honesty, craftsmanship and respect for both the product and the customer. As a SEMA volunteer, he organized and participated in numerous events and programs and was inducted into the 2023 Wheel & Tire Council – WTC (now the Wheel, Tire, Suspension & Brake Council – WTSBC) Hall of Fame for his industry impact.



JAY LENO

A passionate advocate for the automotive community and a high-profile car collector and enthusiast, Leno has utilized his platform to promote automotive culture since the early 1980s. From spotlighting automotive craftsmanship through his weekly automotive show on YouTube, “Jay Leno’s Garage,” and

launching his own line of detailing products—Jay Leno’s Garage Advanced Vehicle Care—to being a perennial guest, keynote speaker and award presenter at the SEMA Show in Las Vegas, Leno has amplified the stature of the aftermarket industry and SEMA’s global presence. He’s also supporting car culture and enthusiasts with government policymakers, working with SEMA leadership and the SEMA Action Network (SAN) to champion California Senate Bill 1392, known as “Leno’s Law”—legislation aimed at modernizing the state’s smog-check process by creating a rolling 35-year exemption for collector vehicles.



ELLEN MCKOY

McKoy has devoted nearly five decades of leadership and service to the automotive aftermarket, beginning as co-owner of Skycoach Customizing in Long Island, New York, in 1975. Throughout her career, she has served as an entrepreneur, journalist, consultant and industry advocate.

Through volunteer service, she served on the SEMA Board of Directors, created and advanced the SEMA Professional Restylers Organization (PRO) and founded the SEMA Businesswomen’s Network (SBN). McKoy was a SEMA executive from 1994-2009. Skilled in institution building, she volunteered for SEMA following her tenure with the association, consistently identifying and addressing opportunities where members needed stronger organization, education or representation. Today, she continues to provide editorial, marketing and public relations services to aftermarket companies as founder of EMK Marketing.



DENNIS OVERHOLSER

Overholser founded Painless Performance Products in 1990 to provide racers, hot-rodders and automotive enthusiasts with easier and safer wiring solutions. His career is marked by a deep-rooted passion for automotive technology and a commitment to delivering superior products, backed by years of industry

volunteerism and legislative advocacy. Overholser served on the SEMA Board of Directors from 2001-06, chaired the Hot Rod Industry Alliance (HRIA), volunteered for HRIA’s precursor—the Street Rod Marketing Alliance (SRMA)—and was inducted into both the Motorsports Parts Manufacturers Council (now the Motorsports Products & Media Council – MPMC) and HRIA Halls of Fame in 2013 for his industry involvement and contributions. **TS**



The SEMA Show is where the industry comes to see what’s next in the specialty automotive aftermarket. (Photo courtesy SEMA)



Tow & Stow Ball Mounts

Adjust to Match Height, Then Stow Cleanly Out of the Way.

Available through
Keystone
Automotive Operations, Inc.

KeystoneAutomotive.com

Become a Dealer



PERFORMANCE

Drivetrain p. 24

Hawks Profile p. 32

Products p. 38



Everything's COOL

The proper performance cooling systems & components make every drive or race better.

BY JOHN CAROLLO

It's one of the many "first things learned" when making performance modifications. Creating additional horsepower creates additional engine heat—and heat for any high-performance vehicle always needs to be controlled.

So begins the eternal search for effective cooling products and systems to keep those high-powered power plants running efficiently. And, as is most often the case, the aftermarket has solutions.

A combination of quality upgrades and system knowledge will help shops get ahead in the performance cooling market, finding willing customers in the street, race and even off-road communities. Looking beyond simple radiator and fan replacements opens up an entire system that can be customized for optimal performance.

Market suppliers can help with observations on recent trends, notes on common errors to avoid and insights regarding innovative new products, so that when a customer arrives complaining about heat issues, you'll be ready with solutions to keep things cool.

MUST-HAVE UPGRADES

Performance radiators, fans and related cooling components may not be top of mind with many enthusiasts looking to add power. But, to maximize efficiency and avoid premature breakdowns, the category is a must-have upgrade for serious drivers and racers.

"Although cooling isn't the most glamorous aspect of the performance market, it is one of the most important. No matter how big, bad and fast your engine is, if you can't keep it running cool, you're in trouble," says Jim Kahl, product manager at Maradyne High Performance. "Selecting and installing the right cooling fan for your vehicle and application can make all the difference in the world when it comes to either having a great day on the track or at the cruise or being overheated on the side of the road."

Often forged in the blazing heat of motorsports, new performance cooling designs nonetheless translate beyond the track.

"Today's performance market isn't just race cars anymore. A lot of the vehicles being built today are expected to do everything. They need to idle in traffic with the A/C on, cruise across the country and still make

Innovations are driving improvements throughout performance cooling systems. (Photo courtesy Mishimoto Automotive)



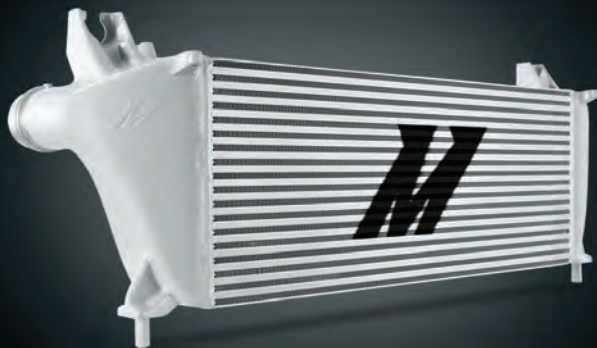
AUTO | TRUCK | DIESEL | JEEP

At Mishimoto, we engineer advanced performance cooling solutions to keep your engine and transmission running stronger, longer, and cooler under pressure.



PERFORMANCE TRANSMISSION COOLERS

- > Lower temps means less stress on your transmission
- > Compatible w/ OEM and other Mishimoto products
- > Includes everything needed for installation



ALUMINUM RADIATORS & HOSES

- > Direct-fit and universal applications available
- > Increased core volume for maximum cooling efficiency
- > Tig-welded aluminum construction
- > Extensive line of silicone hoses and clamps complete the setup



PERFORMANCE INTERCOOLERS

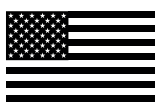
- > Direct-fit and universal applications available
- > Reduces air intake temps for more power
- > Tough aluminum construction to withstand high boost pressure

THE WORLD LEADER IN PERFORMANCE COOLING PRODUCTS®

FOLLOW US!
Instagram
Facebook
YouTube



NOW ACCEPTING
DEALERS



DESIGNED,
ENGINEERED,
AND TESTED
IN THE USA



ALL MISHIMOTO PRODUCTS CARRY A
**LIFETIME WARRANTY
+ ACCIDENT PROTECTION**

PERFORMANCE COOLING PRODUCTS

■ **COOL PRODUCT:** Derale Dual High-Output RAD Fan Powerpack Assembly

■ **FEATURES & BENEFITS:** High-output air-flow; dual electric fans and integrated shroud; heavy-duty construction built for towing, performance, off-road and high-heat applications; multiple mounting options for installation flexibility across a wide range of applications.

*Derale Performance/US Motor Works
Cam Brandt
Performance Division Manager*

■ **COOL PRODUCT:**

PerformanceFit ComboUnits

■ **FEATURES & BENEFITS:** Engineered cooling packages that are ready to install and include an all-aluminum PerformanceFit radiator, built-in automatic transmission cooler, laser-cut aluminum shroud, twin SPAL fans, wiring harness, temperature sensor and Griffin radiator cap.

*Griffin Thermal Products (Griffin Radiator)
Steve Beebe
Marketing Director*

■ **COOL PRODUCT:** Smart Start Fans

■ **FEATURES & BENEFITS:** Unique, hybrid technology provides features of brushless fans without the high cost; Smart Start eliminates amp spike at start-up, minimizing amperage draw and limiting transient voltage between the fan and the alternator; proprietary sickle blade.

*Maradyne High Performance
Jim Kahl
Product Manager*

■ **COOL PRODUCT:**

Performance Aluminum Radiator

■ **FEATURES & BENEFITS:** Direct-fit upgrade with no cutting or drilling required; multiple tube and fin configurations, with each core tailored for optimal fitment and cooling performance per application; built from TIG-welded aluminum for strength, durability and weight savings.

*Mishimoto Automotive
Chris McKendry
Marketing Manager*

■ **COOL PRODUCT:**

SBL (Sealed Brushless Fan) Lineup

■ **FEATURES & BENEFITS:** High-performing brushless electric fans engineered to the highest OEM standards for performance and reliability; trusted by leading race teams worldwide and race-proven for decades in the most demanding motorsports environments.

*SPAL
Tom Longo
Aftermarket Sales Manager*



The growth of towing, off-road, overlanding and high-performance truck applications creates opportunities for upgraded cooling systems. (Photos courtesy Derale Performance)



serious horsepower when the throttle goes down. That has changed the conversation from simply selling a radiator to designing a complete cooling system," says Steve Beebe, marketing director for Griffin Thermal Products (Griffin Radiator).

"We're also seeing more engine swaps than ever before."

The benefits continue to be felt even when the pavement ends.

"The continued growth of towing, off-road, overlanding and high-performance truck applications creates strong opportunities for upgraded cooling systems," notes Cam Brandt, performance division manager at Derale Performance. "Shops should also look for older, high-mileage vehicles where customers are experiencing increased heat loads and can benefit from upgraded radiators, electric fans, transmission coolers and complete cooling packages."

Technological advancements keep the market fresh and exciting, says Tom Longo, aftermarket sales manager at SPAL.

"One of the biggest opportunities is the adoption of brushless electric fan technology. Over the past several years, brushless fans have made significant advancements in performance, efficiency and reliability," he states. "Shops that understand these benefits can better educate customers and recommend the right solution for their application. SPAL now offers the same advanced brushless

technology engineered for OEM applications directly to the performance aftermarket, giving enthusiasts access to the same cooling technology found in today's production vehicles."

While the concept of controlling temperatures seems simple, there's actually much more to it.

Product innovations are



The right fan, radiator and shroud combination can prevent overheating and deliver long-term reliability. (Photo courtesy SPAL)

Klea® Edge

Air Conditioning Performance Check

Check out all the reasons why you should make the switch to **Klea® Edge™ 444A**.



Direct Replacement
for R-1234yf



Cools Faster



Costs Less



Better mileage/range



No System Changes



No Known
Polymerization



Fluor & Energy
Materials

fem@orbia.com | orbia-fem.com



Learn more



Understanding the customer's unique cooling requirements is the first step toward a trouble-free installation.
(Photos courtesy Maradyne High Performance)

driving improvements in secondary components as well.

"The biggest opportunity right now is charge air cooling. As more platforms move to smaller, turbocharged engines to make big power, intercoolers and piping kits are becoming just as important to removing heat as the radiator upgrade itself," says Chris McKendry, marketing manager for Mishimoto Automotive. "We're also seeing steady growth in the diesel and towing segments of the market, where transmission and engine oil coolers are a must for anyone hauling regularly, and in the off-road/overlanding space, where extended trail time means extended heat soak. Track day and grip/drift culture continues to grow, too, which is driving demand for

higher-capacity radiators and oil coolers that can handle sustained high-rpm abuse. Shops that position themselves as thermal management experts across all of these segments, and not just as 'radiator guys,' are the ones capturing the most upside."

FOR SALE: ICONIC HONDA RACE CARS



Honda Racing Corporation USA (HRC US) is giving drivers the opportunity to own iconic championship race machines through the HRC Heritage Racing Program. Launched earlier this year at Monterey Car Week in California, the program includes the sale and restoration of historic Honda and Acura race machines that have won races and championships around the world, including at Le Mans, Sebring, Daytona and Laguna Seca.

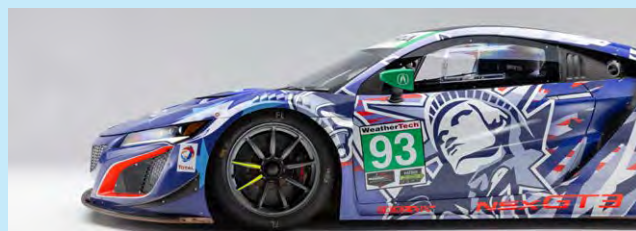
"Classic race cars never die; their myth and aura just grow, and the HRC Heritage Racing Program is all about keeping our incredible Honda and Acura race cars doing what they were born to do: race," says David Salters, president of HRC US. "As the builder of these race-winning machines and custodian of the original IP and knowledge, HRC is uniquely equipped to restore them to their original form, ensuring they can return to historic racing competition authentically and ready to be enjoyed by our customers and fans."

The program grew out of the recent restoration and sale of a number of significant Honda and Acura race machines performing on track at the 2026 Rolex Monterey Motorsports



Reunion at Laguna Seca and featured throughout Monterey Car Week. The first race car available for purchase and restoration from the new HRC Heritage Racing Program is the Sebring-winning V-8-powered No. 26 XM Satellite Radio AGR Acura ARX-01a.

While currently focused on the restoration of historic endurance racers, HRC US plans to expand, according to officials, with future offerings to include more historic Honda-powered IndyCars.



A new program from Honda gives drivers the opportunity to own fully restored championship race machines.
(Photos courtesy Honda Racing/HRC)

REPEATABLE PROCESSES

Proven systems and quality installations help shops build a reputation as local performance cooling experts. Manufacturers list some routine errors to avoid.

“One of the most common installation mistakes is mounting electric fans directly to the radiator core instead of using a properly designed fan shroud,” says Longo. “A fan shroud maximizes airflow by pulling air evenly across the entire radiator surface, resulting in significantly improved cooling performance. Another common mistake is undersizing the wiring. High-performance electric fans draw substantial current, making it critical to use the correct wire gauge and electrical components to safely handle the amperage load. Finally, many shops choose low-cost fans for demanding applications where quality and performance are essential.”

Understanding the customer’s cooling requirements is the first step toward a trouble-free install, says Kahl.

“For example, out on the road, larger and faster fans are not always better. At



Shops can find success selling performance cooling as a complete, engineered system. (Photo courtesy Mishimoto Automotive)

higher vehicle speeds, natural airflow (ram air) across the radiator is very efficient at helping keep the engine cool. A large or overly fast fan can disrupt this airflow and potentially hinder this ram air and heat dissipation,” he explains. “Properly sized, placed and controlled electric fans provide

the most effective and efficient cooling.”

If issues do arrive, Beebe suggests initial troubleshooting should go beyond the radiator itself.

“Cooling systems are exactly that—a system. The radiator, fan package, shroud, airflow through the grille, transmission



ECGS
EAST COAST GEAR SUPPLY

COMPLETE AXLES | RING & PINIONS | LOCKERS | AXLE SHAFTS | TOYOTA CLAMSHELL BUSHING



EastCoastGearSupply.com | 919-672-2705

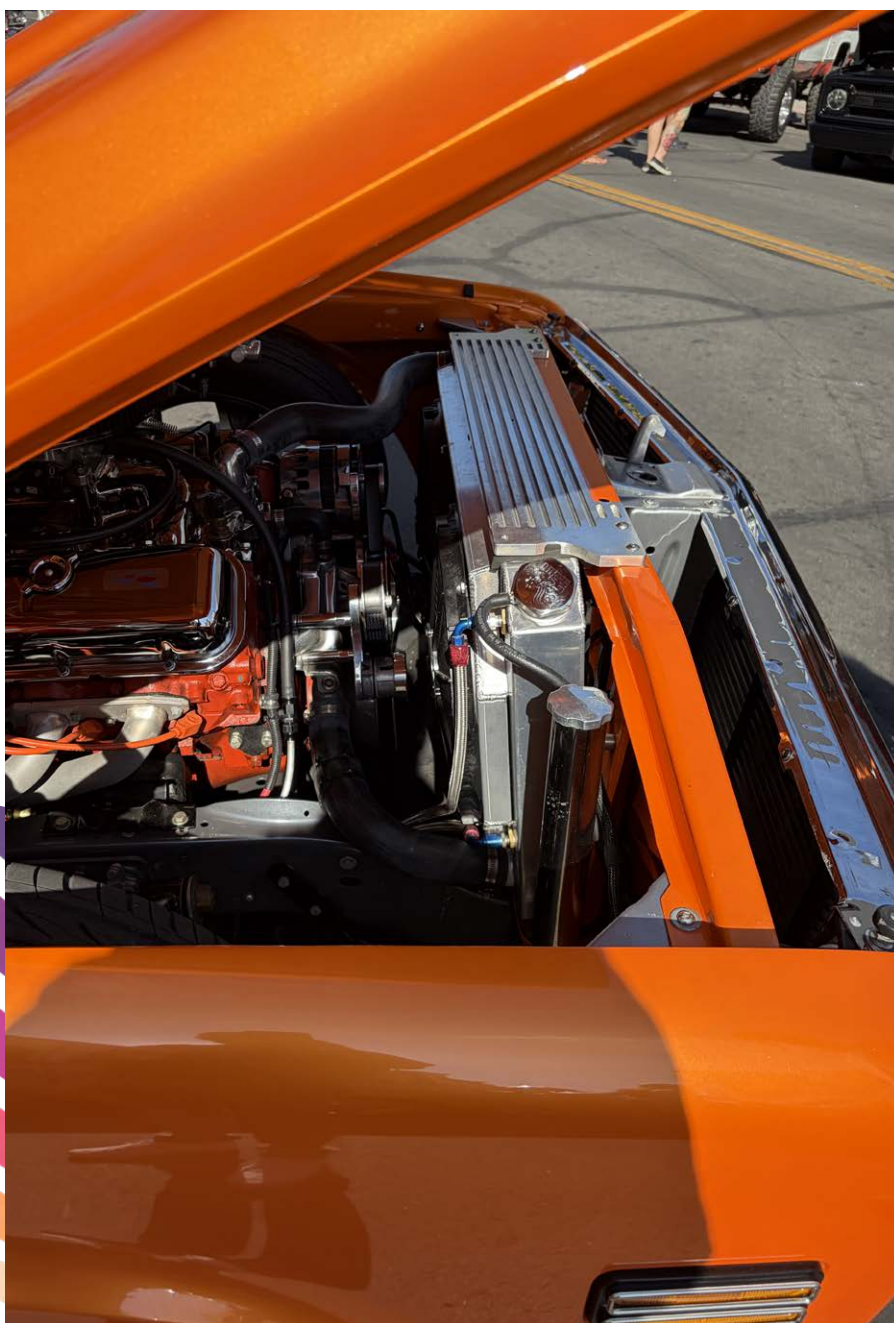
JOIN US AT
SEMA
SHOW
 BOOTH #
 58097
 WEST HALL



cooler, water pump and even the engine tune all have to work together," he says. "We've talked with plenty of customers who replaced the radiator two or three times before finding the real problem somewhere else. The best shops slow the process down just enough to understand how the vehicle is built and how it's going to be driven. That conversation usually leads to the right solution."

Brandt also cautions against "treating

Take the time to understand cooling systems and recommend the right packages to earn repeat business. (Photos courtesy Griffin Thermal Products/Griffin Radiator)



cooling components as isolated parts rather than as a complete system. Shops should consider the vehicle's total heat load, airflow, fan capacity, radiator performance, transmission temperatures and intended use to ensure the components work together properly."

Failure to do so, McKendry explains, can lead to a piecemeal approach that delivers less cooling than expected.

"A shop may swap in a new radiator but leave the factory hoses, clamps, thermostat or fan shroud in place, and those tired factory components become the weak link that causes the customer to return," he explains. "Another mistake is reaching for a generic universal-fit core to save a few dollars instead of a direct-fit unit. Universal parts often mean improvised mounting, bad airflow and trapped air pockets that lead to inconsistent temps. If something goes wrong, there's no manufacturer standing behind the fitment or the install. Selling and installing cooling as a complete, engineered system is what keeps customers coming back for more instead of coming back to complain."

STRATEGIC APPROACH

A successful sales approach for performance cooling systems and components starts with an individualized plan for each project's specific needs.

"Ask customers how they actually use their vehicle, especially whether they tow, haul, off-road or regularly operate under high temperatures, says Brandt from Derale Performance. "Those questions can uncover opportunities to recommend complementary products such as transmission and fluid coolers, high-output electric fans, controllers and upgraded radiators."

Related to the system discussion earlier, Mishimoto Automotive's McKendry then encourages shops to "bundle, bundle, bundle. Almost every cooling upgrade has a natural complement—a radiator pairs with a silicone hose kit and fresh clamps, an intercooler pairs with piping and boost couplers, etc. Presenting these as one job instead of an upsell makes the sale easier, more logical and more profitable per visit."

Griffin Radiator's Beebe agrees that "shops that understand cooling and take the time to recommend the right package are putting themselves in a position to earn repeat business. When a customer's car runs cool on the



Cooling systems may not be glamorous, but they are among the most important aspects of a performance build.
(Photos courtesy Maradyne High Performance)

hottest day of the year, they'll remember who built it."

Longo says suggesting upgrades that provide real performance benefits, such as converting belt-driven mechanical fans to high-performance electric fans, is what sets quality shops apart.

"The right fan, radiator and shroud combination can prevent overheating and deliver long-term reliability," he notes. "When evaluating electric fans, be cautious of airflow claims that seem too good to be true. High cfm requires power, so increased airflow is typically accompanied by higher current draw. At SPAL, all published cfm and amperage ratings reflect actual measured performance."

Top-grade components and a client-first approach help build repeat business.

"In addition to knowing your customers' needs and providing high-quality products, delivering unbeatable customer service and support is what will set a shop apart from their competition," says Kahl from Maradyne High Performance. "Making customers' lives easier makes them want to do business with you. Providing an extra personal touch is guaranteed to help any shop increase their sales." **TS**

MARADYNE®

HIGH PERFORMANCE

Your Partner For Quality Fans,
Heaters and accessories

Become a Distributor

- ✱ American owned and Assembled in the USA ✱
- Broad product offerings across cooling and heating
- Competitive pricing - Industry Leading warranties
- Great distributor and retailer margins



MARADYNEHP.COM

BOSS HOG

Torque Converters

MADE IN
USA

Since 1970

U.S.
VETERAN
OWNED

WWW.BOSSHOGTORQUECONVERTERS.COM

SEMA BOOTH #23412

LOCATED IN CENTRAL HALL

6L80E
700R4
TH350

4L80E
4L65E
4L70E

800 SKU's

NOS / BRACKET RACING / NO PREP CONVERTERS

WE HAVE A FIT FOR **ALMOST EVERY** APPLICATION

POWER From Front to Back

Performance drivetrain products create a real connection in any build.

BY JEF WHITE

As power numbers grow, the importance of quality drivetrain components grows right along with them. Enhanced horsepower and torque will always find the weakest powertrain link, requiring shops to outline the need for a holistic, systematic approach to chasing added performance.

From the trail to the track, drivetrain upgrades make a true difference in vehicle output and driver enjoyment. Strong, sturdy aftermarket offerings bring projects together, allowing shops to create customized combinations that transfer the power from front to back.

Market suppliers can make the process even smoother with observations on recent trends, sales strategies and hot new drivetrain products that make a real connection.

OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND

The performance drivetrain market is currently thriving, in part because of the longevity of today's cars, trucks and SUVs.

"With vehicles staying on the road longer, aftermarket trends reveal a market deeply influenced by the aging vehicle fleet impact on repairs," says Neal Hollingsworth, vice president of marketing for Yukon Gear & Axle. "Older axles and differentials mean more wear-related service and rebuild work, not just upgrades. This provides a solid foundation for drivetrain repair and replacement to be considered."

The same goes for the Pro-Touring market, which swaps new technology into classic vehicles.

"We're seeing many more restomods popping up. Swapping LS motors into older cars is extremely popular right now—you're finding them in almost anything imaginable," says Nelson Gill, president of Boss Hog Torque Converters. "We've designed and manufactured direct-fit torque converters with LS crankshaft pilots to help with these conversions. We're also seeing swaps go the other way, with newer transmissions being paired with older engines."

Meanwhile, while more than capable, most newer vehicles still leave room for aftermarket improvement as well.

"Every non-Rubicon Jeep Wrangler comes off the assembly line with two open differ-

Older vehicles and performance builds are prime targets for drivetrain upgrades. (Photo courtesy Yukon Gear & Axle)

entials,” notes Steve Filipiak, director of marketing for PowerTrax. “That means, at best, in four-wheel drive, two wheels are driving the vehicle forward. Similarly, most two-wheel drive pickups are sold with open differentials. Every vehicle that comes into your shop could benefit from some level of traction control in at least their rear differentials.”

Such are the large number of opportunities to pursue.

“Shops need to continually stay on top of the latest levels of performance,” says Ken Kelly Jr., vice president of Independence Driveline. “As the aftermarket industry continues to evolve, so do the shops. Our power-house components in 2- and 3-speed racing are beginning to progress into overdrive 4-, 5-, 6-, 8- and even 10-speed applications, from straight performance units up to daily drivers.”

Today’s quality drivetrain components help builders overcome the unique challenges of adding modern performance upgrades to accommodate engine swaps into classic vehicles.



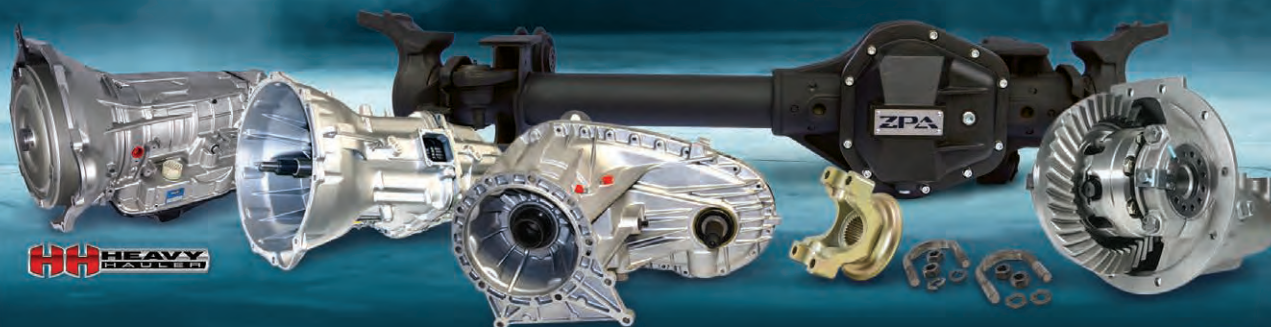
It never hurts to double-check product specs and expected performance levels prior to installation. (Photo courtesy Yukon Gear & Axle)



SHOP THE BEST IN
REMAN AT
SHOP ONLINE: RANDYSWORLDWIDE.COM



TRANSFER CASES | MANUAL TRANSMISSIONS | DROPOUT ASSEMBLIES
AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSIONS | COMPLETE AXLES | DRIVETRAIN COMPONENTS



CHECK OUT THE LINEUP AT SEMA

JOIN US AT
SEMA
BOOTH #
58097
WEST HALL



DRIVETRAIN PRODUCTS

■ HOT PRODUCTS:

LS Torque Converter Line

■ FEATURES & BENEFITS:

Encompasses GM 4L60E, 4L65E, 4L75E, 4L80E and 6L80 transmission applications; lightweight and extremely strong with less rotating mass; top-quality materials engineered to produce high outputs.

Boss Hog Torque Converters
Nelson Gill
President

■ **HOT PRODUCTS:** Performance Torque Converter Component Kits

■ FEATURES & BENEFITS:

Cover all popular performance-related platforms including Turbo 350/400, Powerglide, 2004R, 700R4, 4L60E, 4L80E, 6L80E, 8L90 and more; kits include readily available, reliable components with many size and clutch setup options.

Independence Driveline
Ken Kelly Jr.
Vice President

■ HOT PRODUCTS:

Yukon Gear Kits

■ FEATURES & BENEFITS:

Four stages offered starting with front and rear gears and install kits, moving up to YGKSTG4 kits with gears, kits, diff covers, axles and traction; all components under one part number.

Yukon Gear & Axle
Neal Hollingsworth
Vice President of Marketing

■ HOT PRODUCTS:

Custom TREMEC TKX & Stealth Series Hydraulic Master Cylinder Kits

■ FEATURES & BENEFITS:

Three adjustable master cylinder positions to fine-tune pedal action and feel; maintains stock clutch pedal pivot point; spherical mounting points; sealed reversible bulkhead assembly mounts; 2100 Series billet aluminum reservoir with black anodized finish.

Modern Driveline
Bruce Couture
President/Founder

■ HOT PRODUCT:

PowerTrax GRIP Pro

■ FEATURES & BENEFITS:

Helical gear-driven limited-slip differential; forged steel case; more gears provide more surface area for grabbing; torque-sensing technology puts the driver in control of the vehicle's torque; hands-free operation with no locker buttons to press.

PowerTrax
Steve Filipiak
Director of Marketing

■ HOT PRODUCT:

Strange S60 Rear-End Assembly

■ FEATURES & BENEFITS:

Based on the strong Dana 60 design; large 9.75-inch-diameter ring gear; premium nodular iron casting 3-inch outer diameter 1/4-inch wall tubes; 35-spline axles; numerous options to handle large amounts of horsepower and torque.

Strange Engineering
J.C. Cascio
Director of Business Development



Horsepower upgrades create additional heat that can affect the performance of driveline components. (Photos courtesy Boss Hog Torque Converters)

"Our manual-shift transmission package provides a means to connect vintage cars and trucks with hydraulic release and transmissions that fit the vehicle with correct shift position to look and outperform the OE offerings," says Bruce Couture, president and founder of Modern Driveline.

The components are also built to keep pace with ever-escalating power numbers.

"With horsepower so easily accessible with today's technology, factory rears struggle to survive any type of aggressive driving," notes J.C. Cascio, director of business development for Strange Engineering. "A true 'bolt-in' aftermarket housing that can provide increased strength, reliability and performance is a wise investment for any enthusiast."

STEADY PROGRESS

As with most any vehicle build, an in-depth discussion about each project's planned use provides a strong starting point for aftermarket enhancements.

"It is important for shops to have an open and honest dialog with their customers to understand the intent and potential of the project," says Cascio. "If a rear-end assembly is spec'd out for the current combination without taking into consideration the power upgrades in the future, a potential driveline failure can occur, resulting in an unhappy customer who is spending money twice."

As is often the case with aftermarket

SUPER BEE RETURNS FOR CHARGER'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY

Dodge reignites a legendary nameplate during the 60th anniversary of the Dodge Charger and injects peak firepower into the SIXPACK-powered Charger era with the new 2027 Dodge Charger Super Bee Launch Edition—a 600-hp evolution of the SIXPACK-powered Charger that creates the quickest, fastest and most powerful SIXPACK Charger and the most powerful Dodge Super Bee ever.

The new 2027 Dodge Charger Super Bee Launch Edition is engineered to attack with more power, more cooling, more braking and more repeatable performance from the next generation of American muscle, according to Dodge officials. The twin-turbo SIXPACK H.O. engine features a custom engine calibration, 56mm Garrett turbos and enhanced thermal capacity. Performance is further sharpened with track-focused hardware including 16-inch Brembo brakes, 20-by-11-inch wheels with 305 summer tires, functional aerodynamics and adaptive damping suspension.

“The Super Bee name has always stood for maximum Dodge attitude: bold, accessible performance with the hardware to back it up,” says Matt McAlear, Dodge CEO. “With the new 2027 Dodge Charger Super Bee Launch Edition, we’re not just bringing back a legendary badge, we’re honoring that legacy by outperforming every vehicle that’s adorned

The new 2027 Dodge Charger Super Bee Launch Edition reaches 600-hp and 531 pound-feet of torque. (Photo courtesy Dodge)



the Super Bee badge since 1968. Bigger turbos, 600 hp, massive Brembo brakes, serious cooling, functional aero and dedicated track and drag technology make this the quickest, fastest and most powerful Super Bee ever, and a clear signal that Dodge performance is only getting louder, faster and more relentless.”

A Super Bee-exclusive high-output version of the 3.0L twin-turbo SIXPACK engine tests the drivetrain with 531 pound-feet of torque, establishing a new performance benchmark for the SIXPACK era.

Yukon
Gear & Axle

WILLYS
CRATE AXLES

DANA 44
FRONT AXLE

DANA 44
REAR AXLE

YUKONGEAR.COM • 1-800-347-1188

JOIN US AT
SEMA
AUTOMOTIVE DESIGN

BOOTH #
58097
WEST HALL



Today's quality drivetrain components are built to keep pace with ever-escalating engine power numbers. (Photos courtesy Strange Engineering)

projects, the biggest solution isn't always the best.

"Ask vehicle owners how they use their vehicles and what they intend to do with them," advises Filipiak. "I've seen expensive air or electric locking systems added to pickup trucks that will only ever be challenged with some snow on the road. And

that is only if the person who is driving remembers to hit the button on the dash, to engage the front or rear locker. A hands-free solution, like a limited-slip differential, is perfect for that situation and ours is tough enough for most off-road applications."

Meanwhile, even on simple jobs or upgrades you've added many times before, it never hurts to double-check fit and predicted performance.

"Most shops know exactly what they're doing, considering they've been doing it for

BLACKBIRD: HENNESSEY'S ANALOG HYPERCAR

Hennessey Special Vehicles has revealed the all-new Hennessey Blackbird, an aerospace-inspired, naturally aspirated, manual transmission-driven touring hypercar. Created for drivers who value emotion, engagement and long-distance usability, according to officials, the new model prioritizes sculptural beauty and analog interaction alongside its significant performance capability.

Inspired by the legendary Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird aircraft, the new Hennessey hypercar is an authentic alternative to increasingly complex, digitized and hybridized modern hypercars. The third hypercar developed by Hennessey Special Vehicles, after the Venom GT and Venom F5, Blackbird is built around the quality of the connection between driver, machine and road: natural aspiration, a 6-speed gated manual transmission, rear-wheel drive, lightweight carbon construction and a cockpit with no screens.

"Blackbird isn't just the next chapter in the Hennessey story; it represents the beginning of a new book," says John Hennessey, company founder and CEO. "From the beginning, Blackbird was guided by a simple idea—to deliver an

analog experience where beauty and drama define every moment. This is not a numbers car. We set out to create an unparalleled emotional experience, from the first time you see it to the moment you take the wheel and feel the connection between driver and machine."

At its heart is an all-new, naturally aspirated 6.2L V-8 developed with Ilmor Engineering. Hennessey is targeting 800-850 hp and more than 9,000 rpm, with 0-60 mph achieved in 2.5 seconds and a top speed of 220 mph. An all-new, bespoke Hennessey full-carbon tub, carbon fiber bodywork, target weight of less than 3,000 pounds, adaptive suspension, ABS, traction control and Michelin Pilot Sport Cup 2 tires give Blackbird the technical credibility to match its analog character.

The 6-speed gated manual, exposed shift linkage, physical ignition key, analog controls and screen-free cabin are part of the hypercar's celebration of skill, rhythm, attention and mechanical sympathy, officials added.

The all-new Hennessey Blackbird is an aerospace-inspired, naturally aspirated, manual transmission-driven touring hypercar. (Photo courtesy Hennessey Special Vehicles)



a while,” says Hollingsworth. “But, considering the technical accuracy—most often in newer vehicles that are adding bigger tires—confirming with the manufacturer on correct specs is always a good thing to do.”

When problems arise, they can often be traced back to an incorrect recommendation or choice from the start.

“Most issues come when the customer receives the product and, unfortunately, it’s the wrong component for their specific application,” says Kelly. “Talking with the customer in-depth about what they need to get to their goals is imperative.”

Couture has also seen many cases of starting a project with incorrect components due to a lack of knowledge.

“Don’t assume and force an installation and make something work,” he says. “If someone informs us of what they are building, we can identify and have the correct parts to professionally install a modern-day 5- or 6-speed overdrive transmission with ease.”

Finally, not taking into account the higher



Vehicles from every era all have room for aftermarket drivetrain improvements. (Photos courtesy PowerTrax)



COGNITO

INGENUITY • QUALITY • PERFORMANCE

JOIN US AT
SEMA
BOOTH # 58097 WEST HALL

(866) 426-4648 • **COGNITOMOTORSPORTS.COM**



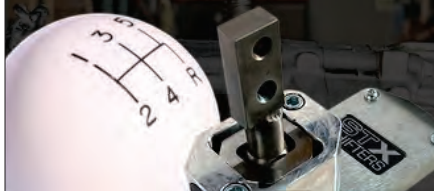
SILVER SPORT Transmissions



TREMEC TRANSMISSIONS



CLUTCHES AND FLYWHEELS



SHIFTERS AND PEDALS



BELL HOUSINGS

**MORE THAN JUST A
TRANSMISSION!**

SHOP NOW



Staying ahead of the curve is the key to continued success and sales growth in the performance drivetrain market. (Photos courtesy Independence Driveline)

temperatures that accompany performance upgrades can cause future issues, says Nelson.

"If you've made power modifications, say to the cam or intake, and are now producing more horsepower in the engine, it creates more heat in the transmission, because that's where all the power goes through," he explains. "At the very least you're going to need to add a transmission cooler, even if you don't change the torque converter."

BRANCHING OUT

Does it feel like your drivetrain work is already thriving? Then maybe consider

casting a wider net for clients.

"Be open to vehicles outside your specialty," says Yukon's Hollingsworth. "If you're a 4x4 shop and a vehicle shows up needing a simple replacement, take the job if you have the time. Drivetrain is a voodoo science, so the good ones need to be open to building their business from whoever comes in the door."

It also pays to maximize each sale with a comprehensive offering that anticipates the customer's current and future needs, says Nelson from Boss Hog Torque Converters.

"It's the age-old adage of add-on sales," he says. "Every time you open the transmis-

sion you should change the fluid and filter. Then suggest add-ons such as an upgraded torque converter, flex plate and/or transmission cooler.”

Market innovation will always require new knowledge for shops that want to stay ahead.

“Keep up with the evolving times of the aftermarket world,” says Kelly from Independence Driveline. “Drivetrain products take time to develop. Beginning work on tomorrow’s products begins today. Staying ahead of the curve is paramount for continued success and sales growth.”

Couture from Modern Driveline also encourages shops to “get educated.”

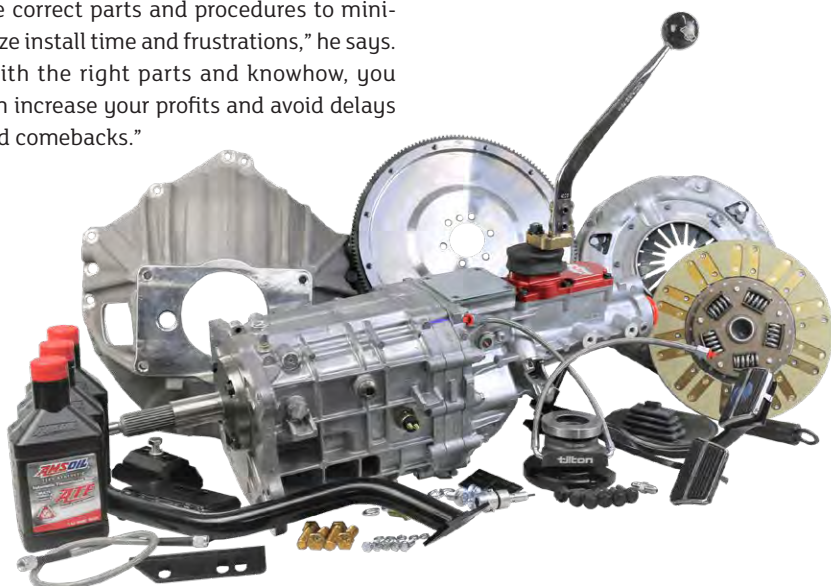
“We will be glad to guide someone through the correct parts and procedures to minimize install time and frustrations,” he says. “With the right parts and knowhow, you can increase your profits and avoid delays and comebacks.”

Cascio from Strange Engineering stresses the value of including drivetrain upgrades in any performance project.

“Help the customer understand the importance of the products behind the motor,” he says. “All the power in the world doesn’t mean anything if you do not have the transmission, driveshaft and rear-end to handle it.”

Finally, there’s always another step to pursue, says Filipiak from PowerTrax.

“In addition to recommending regearing with every tire size change, make sure to explain to your customer what their options are for increasing traction.” **TS**



Quality drivetrain components help builders overcome the unique challenges of adding modern performance upgrades to accommodate engine swaps into classic vehicles. (Photos courtesy Modern Driveline)

EXTREME TRACTION SYSTEMS

POWERTRAX®

OUR ULTIMATE LOCKER

GRIP LOK is the ultimate traction solution! Mechanically-actuated traction control gives you the strength of a spool when you need it and smooth operation around turns.



HELICAL GEAR POSI

GRIP PRO uses 3x2 spiral gear technology, to deliver progressive traction. Throttle input puts you in control of how much traction is applied.



FRICTION PLATE TRACTION

GRIP LS is our clutch-type differential in a forged steel case. Using carbon-fiber and steel friction plate technology, this limited slip is easy to service and rebuild.



THE QUIET ALTERNATIVE

NO-SLIP's precise synchronization mechanism eliminates ratcheting sounds that can be heard with other lockers. Easy to install without affecting your ring and pinion settings.



THE ORIGINAL LUNCHBOX LOCKER

LOCK-RIGHT is perfect for straight-line performance and heavy off-road use. The original lunch box locker! Easy to install without affecting your ring and pinion settings.



POWERTRAX.COM

Soaring to New Heights

Hawks Performance focuses on GM F-body performance, restoration & customization.

BY MAURA KELLER
PHOTOS COURTESY HAWKS MOTORSPORTS

Maura Keller is a freelance writer based in Minnesota. She can be reached at maurakeller@yahoo.com.

For more than two decades, Hawks Motorsports has been a destination for muscle car enthusiasts around the world. From classic Camaros and Firebirds to modern Corvettes and Cadillac CTS-Vs, the Easley, South Carolina-based company has built a reputation as one of the most trusted names in GM performance, restoration and customization.

At the center of it all is founder and president Bruce Hawkins, whose lifelong passion for all eras of muscle cars has shaped both his business and his personal legacy.

"We provide early- to late-model muscle cars and performance upgrades along with restoration parts. We are a full-service install shop along with full dyno and engine calibration, as well as paint and interior," Hawkins says, summing up the scope of the operation.

What began as a small family busi-



Hawks Motorsports is a destination for muscle car fans from around the world.

ness has grown into a global brand serving customers across continents. Yet, despite its reach, Hawks Motorsports still operates with the mindset of a close-knit shop built on personal relationships and deep automotive expertise.

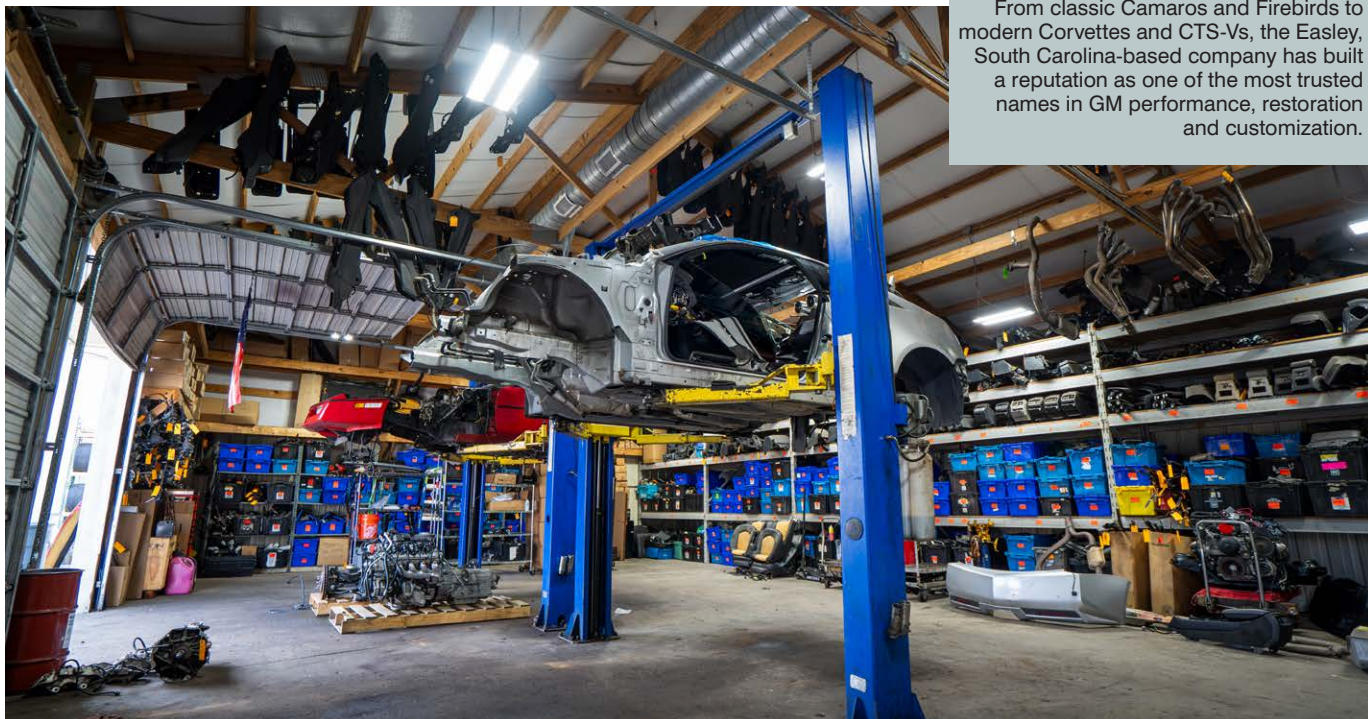
FROM USED PARTS TO INDUSTRY LEADER

Hawks Motorsports has been in busi-

ness for 26 years, but its roots are humble. The company originally started as a used parts operation, catering primarily to owners of third- and fourth-generation Camaros and Firebirds. Over time, customer demand and Hawkins' own ambitions pushed the business into new territory.

"We have evolved from a small, family-owned used parts business to a leading builder of full later-model and

From classic Camaros and Firebirds to modern Corvettes and CTS-Vs, the Easley, South Carolina-based company has built a reputation as one of the most trusted names in GM performance, restoration and customization.



early-model muscle cars," Hawkins explains.

That evolution didn't happen overnight. It required reinvesting in equipment, expanding shop space and building a

team capable of handling everything from engine builds to full restorations. Today, Hawks Motorsports offers a comprehensive lineup of services: performance upgrades,

complete restorations, custom fabrication, paint and interior work, dyno tuning and engine calibration.

The company also stocks a large inventory.

A promotional advertisement for DYNATRAC. The top half features a silver Chevrolet pickup truck with large off-road tires, parked on a dirt path with a sunset background. The DYNATRAC logo and website are prominently displayed. The bottom half shows a detailed view of the ELITE Pro ROCK XD60/80 AXLE-SET, highlighting its robust construction and components. A red banner in the bottom right corner invites viewers to join at SEMA.

DYNATRAC
CONFIDENCE TO EXPLORE

DYNATRAC.COM

JOIN US AT **SEMA** BOOTH # 58097 WEST HALL

ELITE™ Pro ROCK XD60/80 AXLE-SET



The success of Hawks Motorsports is built on personal relationships and deep automotive expertise.

“Yes, we have over 10 acres of in-stock products,” Hawkins says, emphasizing that having parts readily available is a major advantage in an industry where delays can stall entire projects.

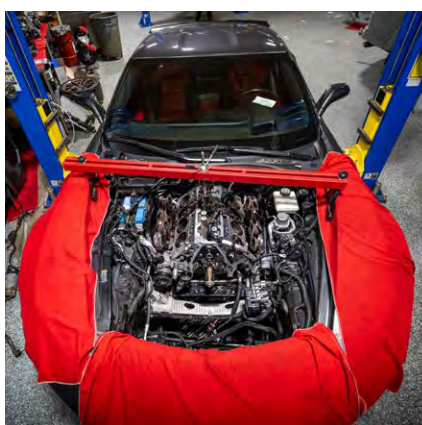
FAITH AS A FOUNDATION

When asked what he is most proud of, Hawkins doesn't point to horsepower numbers or rare builds. Instead, he highlights something far more personal.

“Our success has been on putting our Lord and Savior first in our lives and holding daily prayer in the mornings,” he says.

That faith-based culture is central to how the shop operates. For Hawkins, business success isn't measured in revenue or growth—rather, it's about gratitude, humility and staying grounded.

“It's just the blessing of life and success in general. I think we could all be a little more appreciative of the blessings God gives us every day,” he adds.



Hawks Motorsports sees customer service as its defining feature.

This perspective shapes everything at Hawks Motorsports, from leadership style to workplace environment. The company employs 27 people and is always on the lookout for more.

“We are looking for perfect-fit employees weekly,” Hawkins says. “Finding the best employees for our growth” remains the company's biggest ongoing challenge, he adds.

A WORLDWIDE CUSTOMER BASE

Despite being based in a relatively small



The company originally started as a used parts operation, catering primarily to owners of third- and fourth-generation Camaros and Firebirds.

town in South Carolina, Hawks Motorsports serves a global market.

“Via the internet, and they are worldwide,” Hawkins says, when asked about where he finds his main customers.

The company's reach is driven largely by its website (hawksmotorsports.com), online forums and word-of-mouth marketing. Traditional advertising has taken a backseat to community-driven promotion.

The shop also maintains an active presence across major social media platforms.

“Facebook, Instagram and TikTok,” Hawkins says, noting that those channels help showcase builds, connect with enthusiasts and attract new clients.

Digital visibility has helped Hawks Motorsports become the go-to shop for LS performance in third-generation F-body platforms, as the company is widely recognized for its technical expertise and deep inventory of hard-to-find parts.

THE FIREHAWK CONTINUATION LEGACY

One of the most significant chapters in Hawks Motorsports' story is its Firehawk Continuation Series—an ambitious project rooted in the legendary SLP Firehawks of the early 1990s.

The original SLP Firehawk was one of the most exclusive and performance-focused GM vehicles of its era. Only 25 cars were ultimately built between 1991-92, making them among the rarest factory performance Firebirds ever produced.

Hawks Motorsports took that legacy and reimagined it for the modern era. The company's Continuation Series uses

legitimate 1991 and 1992 Formulas and Trans-Ams and rebuilds them with today's technology. Modern engines, updated drivetrains, advanced braking systems and current aftermarket suspension components transform the classics into contemporary performance machines.

Where the original Firehawks were competitive with top OEM performance cars of their time, the Continuation versions are significantly faster and more powerful. Offered in three performance stages, they allow customers to choose a build that fits their goals and budget.

Hawkins explains that the vehicles aren't replicas or tribute cars—they're continuation builds, designed to honor the spirit of the original Firehawks while delivering performance that meets modern expectations. For Hawks Motorsports, the series represents the perfect blend of history, innovation and craftsmanship.

The Hawks Stage 1 Continuation Firehawk sets the foundation for the entire series, blending classic Firehawk styling with



For each project, the goal is to make the process transparent, personal and trustworthy for clients.

modern performance engineering. Featuring a contemporary drivetrain, standard 1LE disc brakes and WS6 suspension components, it delivers a refined balance of heritage design and OE-quality performance parts. The result is a uniquely immersive driving experience that feels both nostalgic and thoroughly modern, Hawkins explains.

The Hawks Stage 2 Continuation Firehawk elevates performance dramatically, producing 700 hp and 650 pound-feet of torque from a Hawks Motorsports-built LS7 engine. With tubular suspension components and double-adjustable struts, it offers a sharper, more aggressive ride.

Outfitted with premium aftermarket

THE BEST SOUNDING JEEP JL EXHAUST SYSTEM

VALVETRONIC DESIGNS
GOES OFF-ROAD

The **Freedom** to Roam.
The **Freedom** to Roar.
The **Freedom** to Choose.
WITH A CLICK OF A **BUTTON**.



CHECK US OUT AT
VALVETRONIC.COM

AVAILABLE THROUGH THESE WHOLESALE DISTRIBUTORS



**VALVETRONIC
DESIGNS**

OFF-ROAD

Hawks Motorsports' Firehawk Continuation Series is an ambitious project rooted in the legendary SLP Firehawks of the early 1990s.



The Continuation Series uses legitimate 1991 and 1992 Formulas and Trans-Ams and rebuilds them with today's technology.



Modern engines, updated drivetrains, advanced braking systems and current aftermarket suspension components transform the classics into contemporary performance machines.

performance brands, the model redefines Pontiac's iconic "Driving Excitement" promise for a new generation, Hawkins notes.

The Hawks Stage 3 Continuation Firehawk pushes the concept to its limits. Delivering an impressive 1,200 hp and 1,100 pound-feet of torque from a supercharged LS7, the model features race-inspired suspension and top-tier performance components throughout. Designed to be the most extreme Firehawk ever created, Stage 3 represents the ultimate expression of modern muscle, according to the company.

CUSTOMER SERVICE AS A CORE VALUE

Despite the technical complexity of its work, Hawks Motorsports still sees customer service as its defining feature.

"We are a small, family business, and our No. 1 priority is customer service. We have all been in the customer's shoes at one point or another," Hawkins says.

That empathy translates into how the company operates daily. Whether a customer is ordering a small replacement part

or commissioning a six-figure custom build, the goal is the same: make the process transparent, personal and trustworthy.

"We keep most parts in stock; however, some items are special order," Hawkins adds.

And, if Hawks Motorsports doesn't carry something, the team will help track it down. That commitment has built long-term loyalty, and many customers return again and again, sometimes over decades, as their projects evolve or new vehicles enter their garages.

PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY

Hawks Motorsports doesn't operate in isolation. The company works closely with several local businesses, forming partnerships that benefit everyone involved.

"We work in conjunction with several local companies to both of our successes," Hawkins says.

These alliances allow Hawks Motorsports to expand its capabilities, streamline workflows and support the regional automotive ecosystem.

While the customer base may be global, the company remains deeply rooted in its local community.

When asked about the future, Hawkins doesn't offer a rigid business plan or growth forecast.

"We plan to go where the good Lord takes us," he says simply.

That philosophy reflects both faith and flexibility. Hawks Motorsports continues to grow, adopt new technologies and take on increasingly complex builds.

But, at its core, the mission remains unchanged: serve enthusiasts, honor automotive history and pursue excellence without losing sight of gratitude.

For Hawkins, the business is more than a company—it's a calling.

As an avid collector and lifelong enthusiast of F-body cars, he's personally owned several original models. His enthusiasm is inseparable from his profession. To him, it's not just his business, it's his passion, and the shop isn't just a workplace, it's a living archive of GM performance culture. **TS**



NOVEMBER 3-6

LAS VEGAS, NV

REAL INNOVATION

WHERE THE FUTURE OF AUTOMOTIVE IS DISCOVERED.

REGISTER NOW!

SEMA
SHOW

HAPPENING #IRL 2026
SEMASHOW.COM





PERFORMANCE PRODUCTS

Stock Your Shelves With These
Go-Fast Components



GM Free Spin Kit

Dynatrac Products, Louisburg, North Carolina, presents its Free Spin Hub Conversion Kits, available for 2001-10 GM 35-spline applications. Popular with enthusiasts and companies that rely on their trucks, the kits are designed to replace factory unit bearings with fixed spindles. The setups deliver better mileage, greater strength and a reduced profile for the truck.

Witness Paint

Rostar Filters, Oxnard, California, presents its Tamper Seal Witness Paint, designed to detect unauthorized work. The quick-drying paint is easy to apply and available in five vibrant colors. Tamper Seal is used as an inspection paint to prevent tampering and reduce warranty claims on drain plugs, nuts, bolts, fasteners and assemblies, identifying whether a part has been moved from its original position to protect shops from false warranty claims due to tampering while assuring customers that components were inspected/replaced.



Ranger Raptor Exhaust Suite

AWE, Horsham, Pennsylvania, presents its new AWE Exhaust Suite for Ford Ranger Raptor models. The 50-state emissions-compliant, dual 3-inch cat-back exhaust system is engineered to match the truck's off-road credentials without giving up factory refinement. Included BashGuards are thick, reinforced stainless rock rings located where the trail hits hardest for added protection when rock crawling or jumping. An equal-length looped front pipe and a tailored X-pipe smooth the EcoBoost motor of rasp while providing a signature sound.

Slidebar Radio

Custom Autosound, Fullerton, California, presents its Slidebar Radio that blends authentic vintage style with today's top audio features. Designed to fit inside classic vehicle dashes with no modifications required, the radio features a sliding bar that reveals a hidden digital display when moved. Features include 300 watts peak power, Bluetooth hands-free operation and streaming, USB/MP3/WMA playback, iPod docking/control and auxiliary-in for satellite or CD/DVD options. The LCD display offers 7 color choices to match the interior.



Super Duty Locking Hubs

Yukon Gear & Axle, Everett, Washington, presents its Yukon Hardcore Locking Hub Kit, built for strength, reliability and off-road performance. Designed to fit Ford Dana 60 front axles (2005-22 Super Duty), the locking hub is a heavy-duty upgrade for Ford Dana 60s featuring chromoly internals and all-steel construction.



Miata Single Disc Clutch Kits

Advanced Clutch Technology (ACT), Lancaster, California, presents its new, SFI-approved Clutch Kits for 2019-25 Mazda MX-5 Miata (ND2) models equipped with 2.0L engines and 6-speed transmissions. Street Kit versions deliver 312 pound-feet of torque capacity at the engine (46% more than OE), while Race Kits deliver 399 pound-feet of torque capacity at the engine (87% more than OE). The company's Streetlite flywheels, which reduce rotating mass by 26%, are included in kits ZM14-HDSS, ZM14-HDG6 and ZM14-HDG4.

Stainless Steel Brake Lines

Wilwood Disc Brakes, Camarillo, California, presents its new high-performance Flexline Stainless Steel Brake Lines for original equipment (OE) calipers. Specific to year, make and model, the OE Flexline kits are direct replacements for factory rubber lines, providing the correct length and fittings from the vehicle's hard lines to the calipers. High-performance features include an inner liner of PTFE (Teflon) that doesn't expand under pressure, a second layer of tightly woven stainless steel braid and a PVC armor outer layer to prevent abrasion and chafing.



K5 Blazer Pro 4x4 Chassis

Total Cost Involved Engineering.

Ontario, California, presents its new 1969-72 Chevrolet K5 Blazer Pro 4x4 Chassis. Featuring 10 laser-cut frame pieces of U.S. steel, the frame rails include an internal honeycomb insert for increased torsional rigidity. The rails are

widened ahead of the cab and narrowed behind, allowing more room for headers and steering components. Shocks are mounted outside the frame rails to maximize roll stiffness and allow for 37x12 tires. The chassis is built around late-model LS/LT engine/transmission platforms using an Atlas transfer case.

Ford Magnum XL Manual Transmission

TREMEC, Wixom, Michigan, presents its new Magnum XL Ford 6-Speed Manual Transmission Kit with a gear position sensor for 2019-up Mustang GT models. An aftermarket version of the TR-6060 transmission that serves as factory equipment in numerous Detroit-based muscle and sports cars, the XL includes an extension housing that moves the shifter more than 8 inches back from the original Magnum's most rearward location. It is equipped with a shift isolator that provides dampening quality and precision shift feel.



GM Truck Brake Kits

LEED Brakes, Buffalo, New York, presents its new MaxGrip XDS Brake Pad and Rotor Kits, engineered specifically for 1973-2001 GM 1/2-ton trucks. Designed to deliver improved stopping power, long-term durability and aggressive performance styling, the complete braking upgrades include precision-engineered, cross-drilled and slotted rotors paired with semi-metallic brake pads to enhance braking performance, improve cooling efficiency and reduce brake fade under demanding conditions, from daily driving to towing and performance applications. **TS**



Driven By Quality,
Steered by You
Since 1986!



Universal Series

IDIDIT Universal Series steering columns can easily be installed in your street rod, hot rod, kit car, or any application. Our Universal columns are sold by length rather than by application. We offer Straight, Tilt, and Tilt with Telescoping columns in this series.



Retrofit Series

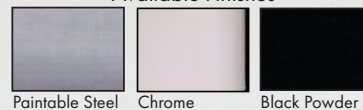
"Retrofit" means that we have designed and developed a column that will fit your specific vehicle, often times with no modification required to your vehicle. When you buy one of our Retrofit columns, you are getting a perfectly engineered aftermarket column that will sit in the original steering column location, and in most cases, will put the steering wheel back in its original position. This is not a stock replacement, it's better!



Performance Series

IDIDIT Performance Series steering columns are light-weight, and designed for autocross, road course, off-road, street to strip, or any other competition racing. These columns come in two different styles, both are available in model specific or universal options.

Available Finishes



Paintable Steel Chrome Black Powder Coat

610 S. Maumee St, Tecumseh MI
517-424-0577 | ididit.com

PRECISIONENGINE

Stromberg Carbs p.46 / Engine Products p.48

Performance Engine Assembly Tips, Part I

Everyone has to start somewhere, so here are some initial focus areas.

BUILD, TEXT AND PHOTOS BY MIKE MAVRIGIAN



Mike Mavrigian owns and operates Birchwood Automotive in Creston, Ohio, where he builds custom engines and street rods

and performs vehicle restorations. He has written thousands of technical articles as well as nine books on automotive technology during the past 30 years. Mike can be reached at (330) 435-6347 or birchwdag@frontier.com. Visit Birchwood's website at birchwoodautomotive.com.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the first article in a two-part series offering performance engine assembly tips.

Not everyone has the budget (or desire) to enlist a pro engine shop to perform a build from start to finish. They may turn to your shop for parts and advice, but plan to do the bulk of the work themselves.

In some cases, the enthusiast may start the process by purchasing a used engine, perform their own disassembly and then turn over the block, heads, crank and rods to a machine shop, with plans to do their own final assembly. In other cases, they might purchase a short block (where the block has been machined, the crank and rods recondi-

tioned or replaced, and the camshaft installed), or a long block, which has all of that plus the heads installed as well.

Novice engine builders often have questions regarding engine assembly and may be confused by various procedures found on the internet. Here, we'll attempt to offer real-world advice that should make any engine assembly go smoothly.

START WITH CLEAN BLOCK HOLES

Whether you're dealing with a used/reconditioned block or a new block, one of the first things to do is to check all female threaded holes for cleanliness—specifically the block's cylinder head bolt holes. Never assume that all female hole threads are “good to go.”

Wearing safety glasses, blow compressed air into each hole and inspect for any debris. There must be no contaminants (and in blind holes, make sure there is no fluid, which would result in hydro-locking that prevents sufficient clamping).

Once you confirm that no debris is present, test-fit a fresh bolt for proper thread engagement. If the bolt presents noticeable resistance, the threads may be slightly deformed or rusted. In this case, use a dedicated thread chaser to clean the threads, then blow any debris out with compressed air.



Cleanliness is the first order of business before any aspect of assembly. Keep all parts clean and organized.

Do not use a cutting tap, which can remove metal and weaken the threads. Cutting taps are designed to create new threads, not to recondition existing threads. A dedicated thread chaser tap will not remove any metal. Chaser taps are readily available from a variety of sources in all popular thread sizes.

HIGH CLAMPING-LOAD FASTENER LUBE

Fastener installation is important for all engine fasteners (bolts, nuts, studs), but the most critical include cylinder head, main cap and connecting rod fasteners. Depending on application and builder preference, commonly used thread lubricants may include engine oil, moly anti-galling paste, EPL lubes such as CMD No. 3



Many assembly lubricants and sealants are available for general assembly, dedicated high-pressure applications and threaded fasteners.

and specialty fastener lubes such as ARP's Ultra-Torque lube.

With, for lack of a better term, "traditional" lubes, it may be advised to cycle new fasteners a number of times before the fastener's torque application "settles." A high clamping-load application threaded fastener may not achieve desired clamping load on the first torque application.

It may be necessary to torque, relax, retorque, relax, etc., a number of times until the fastener settles and achieves the desired clamping load. This is common with the use of many lubricants including oil, moly or an EPL (extreme pressure lubricant).

To avoid the need to cycle/condition the fasteners, ARP developed its Ultra-Torque fastener assembly lube, which years ago replaced its moly lube. The current lube was developed to allow the fastener to achieve full clamping load capability in the first torque step and maintains the same clamping load in future torque applications (according to ARP, within less than 5% deviation). This greatly reduces the "scatter" effect among a group of fasteners, such as with a set of head bolts, with increased accuracy and consistency.

Note: While many of us continue to refer to any ARP assembly lube as "ARP moly" (merely out of habit), the Ultra-Torque lube contains no moly and is a uniquely developed lubricant specifically designed for high-performance fastener lubrication.

CONNECTING ROD TORQUE

Several high-performance connecting rod manufacturers may list two torque values for

their supplied rod bolts, based on the use of oil or moly (again, we use the term "moly" in a rather generic sense). One of the primary reasons published torque values differ has

to do with the coefficient of friction between lubricants (oil or a dedicated low-friction thread lube).

If the bolts (regardless of brand) are



MOTOR STATE
DISTRIBUTING

WE OFFER THE FULL LINE OF

LEED
BRAKES

FOR OVER 60 YEARS, MOTOR STATE DISTRIBUTING HAS FUELED THE PASSION OF RACERS. AT ITS CORE, RACING AND THE PARTS THAT SUPPORT THE RACING INDUSTRY HAVE BEEN AT THE HEART OF WHAT WE DO. SINCE 1964, OUR FOUNDER, GEORGE LANE, UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS WAS MORE THAN JUST A BUSINESS; IT'S ABOUT PASSION.



WWW.MOTORSTATE.COM 800.772.2678 @MOTORSTATEDISTRIBUTING

FUELING PASSION



A dedicated low-friction threaded fastener lube is essential to obtaining accurate and consistent torque values and clamping loads.



Clean all threaded holes in the block with a purpose-designed chaser tap. A common cutting tap will remove metal, as opposed to a chaser tap that is designed to clean threads, removing any burrs or slight deformities.



For high clamping-load applications such as cylinder heads, main caps and rod bolts, apply a dedicated low-friction thread lube to the underside of the bolt head (and both sides of a washer and the underside of a nut if dealing with studs) in addition to coating the threads. This allows you to lube all friction surfaces that would otherwise compromise the torque value.

supplied with the new connecting rods, always follow the rod maker's published torque values. A slightly higher torque value may be listed with the use of oil and a slightly lower value may be listed with the use of a low-friction lubricant because of the differences in friction.

The more "slippery" the lube, the less applied torque may be needed. If rod bolts are treated with oil, but the torque value for a low-friction lube is followed, the fastener may be undertorqued with reduced clamping load. By the same token, if the oil spec is followed but a low-friction lube is applied, the applied torque may overstress the fastener.

Simply put, pay attention to the published specs based on the type of lube.

In addition to published torque specs, it is highly recommended to also monitor rod bolt stretch. The rod maker will provide a maximum-allowable amount of bolt stretch. Both torque and bolt stretch can



After chasing threads, clean with a solvent and blow with compressed air. Quality chaser taps feature a flat end instead of a taper, enabling you to clean the bottom of blind holes.



Regardless of the application, it's a good idea to always apply a thread lube to any stainless steel fastener to prevent potential galling.

differ slightly based on the rod bolt material, bolt diameter and bolt length.

The bolts must achieve a slight amount of installed stretch in order to provide the necessary clamping load. But if stretched too far, beyond the bolt's elastic range, bolt failure is a very real possibility. Invest in a rod bolt stretch gauge or borrow one from a friend.

Using a stretch gauge is not overly complicated. First, place the bolt onto the gauge and zero the dial. Once that bolt has been torqued to spec, place the gauge back onto that bolt and note how much longer the bolt has become. Do this for each rod bolt.

For each and every rod bolt, first place it onto the gauge and once again zero the gauge dial. You cannot just zero the gauge on one bolt and then use that reference for the remaining bolts. Even though quality after-market rod bolts are well made, there will be slight differences in shank length—that's simply the nature of bolt manufacturing.

Yes, checking bolt stretch will add time to the build, but it's well worth it to verify that the rod bolts have achieved sufficient stretch and have not stretched beyond the allowable maximum. Generally speaking (again, this will vary based on the specific bolts), proper stretch will likely be in the range of 0.0025 to 0.0045 inch.

Finally, it's a good idea to make a record of each bolt's torque and stretch, just in case you ever have a problem. This data can help pinpoint an issue down the road regarding rod bearing or bolt failure. Record each bolt's location, torque and stretch.

FINAL ASSEMBLY LUBES

Consider the assembly lubes for rings and cylinder walls, camshafts, bearings, oil pumps and valvetrain parts.

Major factors to consider for an assembly lube include:

- **Oil solubility.** The lube must be able to mix with the sump's oil supply. Any grease-based lube must be oil-soluble. If not, once circulated to the sump and pumped back into the circuit, it can pose risks of plugging orifices and small passages.
- **"Stickability."** The assembly lube should provide enough cling/good adhesion properties to stay in place after application without dripping off.
- **Anti-wear properties.** Especially at high-load areas such as bearings, rockers, cam lobes, lifters, valve stem tips and push-rods, the lube must be able to protect frictional surfaces from scuffing and micro-welding. Initial start-up poses the

biggest risk in terms of wear, scuffing or seizing, making assembly lubrication absolutely critical.

Today's market offers a dizzying array of sources for engine assembly lubes. Without trying to promote one over another, quality assembly lubes are offered by trusted brands such as Clevite, Brad Penn, COMP Cams, Permatex, Isky, AMSOIL, Red Line Oil, Royal Purple, Torco, CRC, Lucas and others.

BEARINGS

Main bearings, rod bearings and cam bearings may be initially coated with any acceptable lube such as engine oil or engine assembly lube, but using an assembly lube that offers a good "cling" factor is recommended to prevent drain-off while the engine sits prior to initial firing. This is especially important if the engine will be stored for an extended period prior to initial firing, even though you plan to pre-oil prior to start-up.

There are several good synthetic engine assembly lubes that offer very low coeffi-

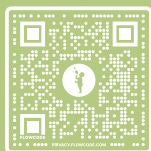
Bearings should be coated with a high-pressure lube that clings and sticks to the surface to ensure lubrication upon initial start-up. Make sure the lube is oil-soluble.



Drive Hope for Families Facing Pediatric Cancer

At the Austin Hatcher Foundation, kids and teens facing pediatric cancer rebuild strength through Industrial Arts Therapy — learning welding, fabrication, and vehicle building as part of their recovery.

YOUR SUPPORT FUELS THE ONLY PROGRAM OF ITS KIND IN THE COUNTRY — AND KEEPS EVERY SERVICE FREE FOR FAMILIES.



Join the automotive community in driving hope forward.
hatcherfoundation.org



THANK YOU TO
OUR PARTNERS





Place the rod bolt onto the stretch gauge and adjust the dial to zero.



Without disturbing the gauge dial, place the gauge on the torqued bolt to read stretch.

cients of friction and that remain on the surfaces even after extended periods of storage. Naturally, we need to remember to also lube thrust bearing surfaces as well.

Note: During crankshaft installation, once the main caps have all been seated—with cap bolts engaged but before torquing—use a mallet to tap the crankshaft back and forth. This will help align the main caps, avoiding bearing damage. After tightening to about 10-15 pound-feet, tap again fore and aft. As always, tighten the fasteners in stages (10-, 25-, 35-, 45-pound-feet, etc., to final torque).

CAMSHAFT

Prior to camshaft installation, the cam lobes must be coated with an appropriate lubricant. Flat tappet cams absolutely require a high-pressure lubricant that will prevent premature wear between lobes and lifters. It's always best to follow the cam maker's recommendation in terms of lube choice (cam makers often include the recommended lube with a new cam).

Granted, while roller cams are not as critical in terms of break-in, some cam makers will specify a particular break-in lube, while some builders prefer to simply use any quality engine assembly lube to coat the lobes. Even though we don't encounter the same frictional forces between the lobes and the lifter roller bearings, a high-pressure lube is recommended.

Since many commonly available engine oils today have greatly reduced levels of critical high-pressure ZDDP (zinc dithiophosphate, commonly referred to simply as "zinc"), a flat tappet camshaft requires the use of a specific engine oil that features adequate levels of zinc phosphate. Oil makers such as Brad Penn, Joe Gibbs, Royal Purple, Red Line Oil, COMP Cams and a myriad of other brands offer these specialty oils, both available for initial break-in and for long-term use.

An option is to run your oil of choice and add a bottle of zinc concentrate, which is offered by a number of manufacturers. An adequate level of extreme-pressure formulation (ZDDP) is needed for both break-in and for routine engine operation.

Be aware that some dedicated "break-in" oils do not contain corrosion inhibitors. As a result, only use a dedicated break-in oil

for engine break-in, changing the oil and filter after 100 to 500 miles of driving, then switch to the oil of choice.

LIFTERS

Flat tappet lifter faces require the same high-pressure break-in lubricant as needed for the cam lobes. The lifter body may be coated with engine oil or a preferred assembly lube.

Do not confuse engine assembly lube with fastener assembly lube. A dedicated engine fastener lube is not designed to lubricate moving parts. Roller lifters may be lubed with engine oil or an engine assembly lube of your choice.

Pay attention to the lifter maker's recommendations for the engine's sump supply, as some high-performance, close-tolerance roller lifters require a relatively low-viscosity engine oil (5W-30 for example). When dealing with hydraulic lifters, it's common practice for some builders to soak them in oil and sometimes to try to pump them up prior to installation.

Use care here, however, as some performance hydraulic roller lifters have been pre-charged with oil during manufacturing. Check with the maker before attempting to perform a pump-up.

TIMING CHAIN/GEARS

Common practice involves soaking a timing chain in clean engine oil, preferably overnight. If a gear drive is involved, a high-pressure assembly lube should be applied to all gear teeth.

For a chain or gears, your choice of lube may differ. Some may prefer 30W engine oil and others synthetic engine oil. For a gear drive setup (as opposed to chain drive), you may prefer a high-pressure lube such as CMD No. 3 or a synthetic assembly gel.

CYLINDER WALLS

Prior to piston installation, each cylinder must be thoroughly cleaned using a mild solvent such as isopropyl alcohol and clean, lint-free towels.

Continue to wipe the cylinder walls, frequently switching to fresh towels, until the final towel is clean and shows no evidence of residue. A thin application of lubricant can then be applied.

Most builders agree that cylinder walls and rings should be treated only with petro-



Do not install studs using a high degree of torque. Cylinder head studs should be installed hand-tight (although some stud makers may specify a very light torque value). The required clamping load will result from tightening the nut.



Cylinder walls and rings may be coated with engine oil or an approved assembly lube. However, avoid the use of a full-synthetic lube or oil in order to better allow ring seating during start-up.

leum engine oil. Using a full-synthetic oil poses a potential concern with regard to a possible delay in piston ring seating.

While a synthetic assembly lube, such as Royal Purple's Max Tuff (to cite but one example), may be an outstanding choice for coating bearings, pushrods, rocker arms, piston wrist pins, etc., avoid using a full-synthetic lube on piston rings and/or cylinder walls, as this type of super-slippery lube may hinder initial ring seating.

Granted, there is debate regarding the use of a full-synthetic oil during assembly (on rings and walls) and for an engine's initial break-in run. While a super-slippery full-synthetic oil is commonly avoided for

break-in, a variable involves how the cylinder walls were finished.

When dealing with walls that were finely honed and plateau-brushed, this should allow rings to seat much quicker, wherein a full-synthetic might not pose an issue.

For reassurance, most builders will probably agree that initial break-in should be performed with a "conventional" petroleum oil.

Once rings have seated, the decision to run a full-synthetic oil is then up to the builder or owner. But again, to address the concerns during engine assembly, it's wise to avoid using a full-synthetic lube on cylinder walls and rings. **TS**

VISIT OUR BOOTH #23365

SEMA 2026
SHOW



**YOUR #1 CHOICE FOR
AIR INTAKES
FILTERS
EXHAUST
& MORE**



MADE IN USA
CORONA, CA

SCAN FOR DEALER INFO



dealer.afepower.com

951-493-7100

90 Years of Stromberg Carburetors

An old-school hot rodding favorite, its 97 Series carbs are now just the beginning.

TEXT & PHOTOS BY TONY THACKER



The Stromberg team, headed by British owner Clive Prew (left), continues to innovate carburetor designs and has expanded into linkage kits and fuel line parts.



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.

It's hard to believe in these days of AI, robotics, 3D printing and other modern manufacturing techniques that there is a business—a good business—still building a carburetor introduced 90 years ago, in 1936. Such is the story of Stromberg Carburetor, which reengineered the hot rodder's favorite Stromberg 97 model back in 2006.

Stromberg carburetors have been around since the automobile's earliest days. In 1909, Alfred Stromberg and five others formed the Stromberg Motor Car Devices Company, producing just one brass carburetor a day. By 1928, it was up to 4,000 a day, thanks to a huge staff of nearly 12,000.

In 1929, the company was sold to Bendix Aviation and moved to South Bend, Indiana. From the 1940s until the '60s you'd find a Stromberg carb on your Buick, Olds, Plym-

outh or Studebaker, and even some Auburns and Lincolns.

However, by the '70s, the carburetor's days were numbered. In the U.S., Stromberg's last hurrah was the 1974 GMC V-6 truck. In Europe, the name was applied to a Zenith-designed constant-vacuum carburetor and sold to a host of popular brands including Mercedes and Lotus.

FORD PARTNERSHIP

Stromberg's partnership with Ford started in 1933 with a range of "EE model" two-barrel (2-bbl) carburetors in various sizes. The Stromberg 40 and 48 came with a bigger 1-1/32-inch venturi and a reported air volume of 175cfm. Some Lincolns had a 1-inch, 160cfm-rated LZ version, and Ford's thrifty little V8-60 motor came with the



The company is blending traditional products and new introductions as it marks 90 years.



Strombergs have built a reputation as being easy to work on and readily available from multiple outlets.

81, a smaller version of the 97 with a 0.81-inch throat.

The 97 became original equipment on the Ford V-8 in 1936, and while it was replaced after only two years by the Holley 94 model (according to legend, the Holley was a dollar cheaper), its position was quickly cemented as the hot rod carb of choice for decades to come.

Why? No doubt, ease of availability and racing success played their parts. Where racers led, the street car guys followed—"Win on Sunday, sell on Monday."

Most early hot rods were V-8 Fords (cheaper, lighter, quicker), so most of those cars came with a Stromberg. And, if you wanted more, you'd find them in junkyards by the bucket. Yes, there were bigger, fancier 2-bbl carbs around on other upmarket cars, but probably not as plentiful.

It's also worth noting that you could buy a brand-new Stromberg 97 from your local speed shop and even through Ford dealers and parts stores for almost 30 years after Henry dropped them.

For their part, many enthusiasts decided the simple 97 was easier to work with than the Holley 94 series. For starters, they'd say, Stromberg jets are easier to access for tuning—under a plug on the outside rather than deep in the fuel bowl. Also, the 94 power valves are vacuum-activated, so they can rupture in the event of a backfire. With a mechanical power valve activated by the accelerator pump, 97s are also easier to control in multiples.

Every hot rodder knows that more carburetors mean more air, which means more

power, so who's going to be happy with just one carb? It's no surprise that so many early speed merchants made sure their hot, new, race-proven intakes were designed for 97s. Two, three or even four carbs were commonplace, and companies from Edelbrock to Offenhauser offered intakes for four, six and even eight carbs.

STILL GOING STRONG

Fast-forward to the tail end of the 1990s and the resurgence of traditional hot rods brought on by companies such as the SO-CAL Speed Shop and it was no surprise that, in 2006, the Stromberg 97 became available again. Under the tagline "Just the same – better than ever," the all-new 97s were exactly that. They were built to original blueprint specs with specific improvements along the way.

Since reintroducing the 97, the Stromberg team, headed by British owner Clive Prew, has extended the range to include linkage kits and fuel line parts. The company also developed a new 116cfm Stromberg 81, as well as the new 750cfm BIG97 tri-power, designed to give small-block Fords and Chevys a traditional look without compromising on performance.

Underlining this fact, the FIA (Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile) recently sanctioned the "new" 97 for multiple period-correct carb assemblies on vintage sports cars.

In 2025, I had the opportunity to test-drive Stromberg's demonstrator, a 1955 Pontiac Safari wagon with a Tri-power setup on its rebuilt 287. Over a period of six weeks, I

covered 5,000 miles—much of it towing my hot rod on a trailer. The wagon never stuttered or failed to start and achieved about 12 mpg when towing. Without the trailer I often saw 20 mpg.

Stromberg introduced its e-FIRE line of electronic distributors in 2016, starting with the so-called "crab"-style, front-mount ignitions for 1932-48 Ford V-8s in both original 6-volt positive and updated 12-volt negative versions.

The company-branded coils, "old-school" coil brackets and plug wire kits complete the circle.

Hot on the heels of the original e-FIRE line, it developed a drop-in, two-wire electronic distributor for 1949-53 Ford 8BA V-8s, again with no need for a separate control box.

Unlike the stock Ford 8BA Load-O-Matic distributor, the new e-FIRE has no special vacuum requirements, so builders can swap that old Ford carburetor for a new Stromberg 97.

Marking its 90th anniversary, 2026 has seen Stromberg launch an all-new vacuum advance distributor for small- and big-block Chevrolets. Distributors for small-block Ford, early Cadillac and Pontiac models are already on the drawing board, and in development are new distributors for early VWs and flathead Model A/B/C Ford four-cylinder engines.

It's amazing to think that a somewhat insignificant 90-year-old carburetor continues to have such an impact on the automotive community, from the street to the track. **TS**



ENGINE PRODUCTS

The Latest Under-Hood Offerings



Bolt-On A/C Hose Kits

Kwik Performance, Fair Grove, Missouri, offers its A/C Hose Technology, now with applications for 1973-87 Chevy C10 "Square Body" models. The bolt-on solution for C10 enthusiasts upgrading to modern Sanden compressors include professionally crimped hoses cut to the precise length for the specific engine bay layout of 1973-87 trucks. Prebent hardlines flow into the USA-made standard-barrier hose. Kits include hoses, accumulator/dryer, trinary safety switch, fixed orifice tube, PAG oil and extra O-rings.

Synthetic Motor Oil Line

AMSOIL, Superior, Wisconsin, presents an updated formulation of its top-tier Signature



Series Synthetic Motor Oil line. Featuring premium base oils and a precision-engineered additive system, the synthetic oils help control wear and maintain viscosity even in extreme heat and high-pressure and cold-start operating conditions. They combat volatility, helping reduce oil consumption, and protect against low-speed pre-ignition (LSPI) that can damage pistons and other critical engine components in today's turbocharged, direct-injection engines.



Return Hoses

Plews & Edelmann, Dixon, Illinois, presents its Edelmann Elite Return Hoses, a new high-performance product category for the hydraulic power steering aftermarket. The new line includes fully assembled return line assemblies with correct routing and fittings, ready to install with no cutting or hand

fabrication required. Bulk coil is also offered, in 3/8-, 1/2- and 5/8-inch diameters. Each assembly includes original-style fittings, zinc-coated tubes and double-lock beading with barbed tube ends. An upgraded rubber formulation cuts oil-induced swelling by half.

Bronco/Jeep Calibrator

Superchips, Sanford, Florida, a **Holley Performance Brand**, presents an expansion of its Flashcal+ Handheld Calibrator platform, with new support for 2021-newer Ford Bronco and continuing support for Jeep JK, JL and JT models. The affordable, smartphone-based solution allows customization of vehicle settings, recalibrating for aftermarket modifications and unlocking vehicle-specific features directly from iOS or Android devices. Designed for on- and off-road enthusiasts, Flashcal+ connects through a OBD-II Bluetooth dongle and mobile app.



GM Programming Module

Range Technology, Odgen, Utah, a **Holley Performance Brands** company, presents its new DFM Pro Module, the next evolution in Dynamic Fuel Management control for GM V-8 engine applications. The new DFM Pro introduces Bluetooth connectivity and smartphone integration for enhanced control and customization. Through an intuitive mobile app, drivers can monitor diagnostics, adjust throttle response and optimize vehicle performance directly from their smartphone. It disables Dynamic Fuel Management (DFM) and Auto Start/Stop.



Bypass Filtration System

Hot Shot's Secret, Mt. Gilead, Ohio, presents its Pure Diamond Bypass Filtration System that delivers cleaner oil and extended engine life across a wide range of applications. The supplemental oil filtration system continuously removes solid contaminants such as wear metals, carbon and dirt from engine oil at a controlled rate. By filtering a portion of oil at a time through densely packed depth-media filtration, it captures debris down to 2 microns and removes up to 96% of wear-causing particles.



Fuel System & Ignition Upgrades

BluePrint Engines, Kearney, Nebraska, offers new Carburetor Inlet Extensions, Fuel Pressure Gauge Adapter Fittings and LS-Compatible Ignition Coils as additions to its performance lineup. Designed for builders seeking dependable solutions across a variety of engine applications, products simplify fuel routing, improve fuel pressure monitoring and deliver consistent ignition performance.

Ford 5.0L Mustang GT Tuner Kit

Vortech Superchargers, Oxnard, California, presents an all-new S650 Mustang Supercharger Tuner Kit for 2024-26 Ford Mustang GT models. Created for aggressive power, proven reliability and race-level performance, the S650 system features an all-new bracket architecture, optimized inlet routing and precision accessory integration. The design maximizes belt control, airflow efficiency, system rigidity and OEM-level fitment under extreme performance conditions.



thermal management and aesthetic preservation are critical. It creates a clear, high-gloss finish that withstands ambient temperatures exceeding 2,100 degrees and maintains integrity and appearance under prolonged thermal stress.

High Temperature Application Kit

ZyCoat, Olathe, Kansas, presents its ZyClear High Temperature Application Kits, now featuring new packaging. The advanced coating formula creates a high-performance, transparent coating engineered for extreme internal combustion engine environments where both



Wireless Throttle Response Controller

Pedal Commander, Thousand Oaks, California, presents Fn Tuned, a new, fully wireless throttle response controller. Available at fntuned.com and compatible with most modern drive-by-wire vehicles, regardless of fuel type or transmission, the device plugs directly into the accelerator pedal position sensor and modifies the factory throttle signal to eliminate drive-by-wire throttle lag. The result is a sharper pedal response, faster acceleration off the line and a driving experience that matches the vehicle's capabilities.

Camshafts for SBF Top-End Kits

Air Flow Research (AFR), Valencia, California, offers AFR Stage 1 and Stage 2 Small-Block Ford Camshafts, developed in partnership with **Andrews Products** to maximize performance of AFR 185cc

Enforcer SBF cylinder heads. Dyno-tested and validated, the cams are a direct match for AFR Small-Block Ford Top-End Performance Kits, delivering a balanced blend of throttle response, drivability and street-ready power. Profiles are available for mild street applications to more aggressive performance builds.



Diesel Products

K&N Engineering, Riverside, California presents its expanded Performance Diesel Products Line. Improve towing power in modern Chevy, Ford and Ram diesel pickups with NextGen Air Intake Systems and Dryflow Replacement Air Filters, with no tune required. The intake systems include a redesigned filter, intake tube, airbox and fresh air inlet to provide horsepower gains with a sleek OEM style. Easy to install with Quick-Lock Technology, the air filters feature a precision-engineered tapered mounting bead interface to snap securely into the airbox. **TS**

Restyling

AFTERMARKET ACCESSORIES

Off-Road Trends p. 58

Customer Relationships p. 64

Sunroofs p. 68

Products p. 70

Everything In Its Place

Toolboxes & cargo carriers help make any vehicle more efficient.

BY JEF WHITE

Aftermarket customers who like to be organized will love today's assortment of toolboxes and cargo carriers. From keeping tools secure in a truck bed on the jobsite to supporting bags of groceries and sports equipment in the rear of a family SUV, there's a storage solution to fit any vehicle and any driver.

An important category on its own and a strong candidate for add-on sales and package opportunities, cargo carriers increase efficiency and utility, allowing owners to maximize vehicle capabilities. Many offerings attach securely yet temporarily, increasing versatility while maintaining value.

Shops looking to thrive in the toolbox and cargo carrier arena can learn from manufacturers' observations on market trends, common misconceptions and hot new product offerings. When it's time to get organized, the aftermarket can help

find a place for everything and put everything in its place.

MORE THAN A SIMPLE BOX

With modern features and specialized designs, today's toolboxes and cargo carriers go far beyond a simple four walls.

"Consumers are expecting more from their vehicle accessories than ever before. They're looking for products that combine premium design, durability and versatility; not just additional storage," says Craig Metcalf, automotive manager for Kūat. "The continued growth of overlanding, camping, road trips and active outdoor lifestyles has also increased demand for cargo solutions that perform well while complementing the appearance of modern trucks and SUVs."

Many customers treat their trucks as both mobile workspaces and major investments, says Kristi Feeney, director of marketing, aftermarket automotive, for UWS.

Truck owners expect storage products to deliver security, weather protection, convenient access and a clean, professional appearance. (Photo courtesy UWS)

"They expect storage products to deliver more than basic capacity—they want security, weather protection, convenient access and a clean, professional appearance without compromising how they use the rest of the truck bed," she explains. "This gives shops an opportunity to guide customers toward a complete storage solution rather than competing on price alone."

A rise in multiuse trucks is bringing more opportunities to the market.

"Today's truck owners increasingly use their vehicle during the work week and for recreation on the weekend," says Bridget Noonan, brand director for DECKED. "Storage systems have to be versatile enough to secure professional tools on Wednesday and camping or fishing gear



CONFIDENCE UNDER *EVERY LOAD*

TrailFX Bed Mats are built for customers who expect their trucks to work as hard as they do. Manufactured from a high-strength rubber compound, these mats resist cracking, UV exposure, harsh weather, and many common chemical spills. The thick 3/8-inch construction helps protect the bed from dents and abrasions, while the textured surface helps keep cargo securely in place. Available for most popular truck applications, each mat is custom molded for a precise fit around fender wells. No matter what the day demands, they're ready for the long haul.



Exclusively distributed by
Keystone
Automotive Operations, Inc.

TOOLBOXES & CARGO CARRIERS

■ HOT PRODUCT:

DECKED Drawer System

■ FEATURES & BENEFITS:

Flagship cargo management solution designed for truck owners who need secure, weather-resistant storage without sacrificing bed space; helps organize tools, gear and equipment while maintaining a 2,000-pound payload capacity for heavy hauling.

DECKED

Bridget Noonan

Brand Director

■ HOT PRODUCT:

Küat Varial Rooftop Cargo Box

■ FEATURES & BENEFITS:

Premium cargo box designed and assembled in the USA; combines modern styling with practical functionality; 18 cubic feet of storage; three-sided access with a forward-opening lid; premium gas struts; integrates with the entire Küat products ecosystem; shipments begin in October.

Küat

Craig Metcalf

Automotive Manager

■ HOT PRODUCT:

RealTruck SwingCase

■ FEATURES & BENEFITS:

Unique product that uses the “dead space” in the truck bed between the tailgate and the wheel well; provides storage for those much-needed ratchet straps, small tools or whatever else owning a truck throws at you.

RealTruck

Joey Scelza

Senior Manager – Retail Sales

■ HOT PRODUCT:

Thule Motion 3 Cargo Box

■ FEATURES & BENEFITS:

Modern aerodynamic design that complements today’s SUVs and crossovers; increased cargo capacity; dual-side opening; user-friendly mounting system; improved access to the vehicle’s rear hatch; premium fit, finish and durability.

Thule Group

Travis Stevens

Senior Category Manager

■ HOT PRODUCT:

Tmat Truck Bed Organization System

■ FEATURES & BENEFITS:

The patent-pending, complete slide-out system makes it easy to reach gear without climbing into the truck bed; modular design allows for customizable, versatile organization; easy installation that does not require drilling or modifying the bed in any way.

Tmat Products LLC

Jeff Jegelwicz

Domestic Sales Manager

■ HOT PRODUCT:

UWS Pushbutton Toolbox

■ FEATURES & BENEFITS:

Extra-thick aluminum construction for fleet use; durable with faster, more convenient access; larger Quick-Strike pushbuttons provide quick access from either side of the truck; patented RigidCore foam-filled lid resists bending, bowing and binding.

UWS

Kristi Feeney

Director of Marketing,

Aftermarket Automotive

■ **HOT PRODUCT:** Westin Brute Contractor Top Sider Toolbox With Drawers & Doors in Black

■ FEATURES & BENEFITS:

Made in the USA; combines a spacious top-flip door compartment and side access drawers; constructed from heavy-duty, 0.063-inch aluminum diamond tread; strong and lightweight; naturally resists rust and corrosion; stainless steel folding T-handle locks.

Westin Automotive

Tony Savasta

Vice President of Marketing

■ HOT PRODUCT:

The EXO System

■ FEATURES & BENEFITS:

Offers two storage levels on the hitch—on the lower level the EXO GearLocker is a fully enclosed, lockable cargo box, and on the upper level the EXO GearWarrior is an open basket for securing larger items like coolers, firewood and luggage.

Yakima Products

Garrett Barnum

Director of Product Strategy



Successful shops treat every installation as a complete system consultation, taking bed length, payload needs and accessory compatibility into account. (Photos courtesy DECKED)

on Saturday without needing to swap out equipment.”

In general, people are looking for ways to get more out of their vehicles, says Travis Stevens, senior category manager for Thule Group.

“With car prices and fuel costs what they are today, getting a bigger vehicle can cost tens of thousands of dollars. At the same time, people expect one vehicle to do everything, whether that’s family road trips, weekend camping or getting kids and all their gear to practice,” he says. “Cargo carriers are a simple, efficient way to add space when you need it without trading in the vehicle that’s already in the driveway.”

The continued growth of the professional trades and service fleet market coupled with higher demand for trucks as mobile workspaces are creating new profit centers, says Tony Savasta, vice president of marketing for Westin Automotive.

“As skilled labor remains in high demand and workers seek greater efficiency, fleet operators are investing in premium storage solutions that improve organization, security and productivity rather than simply purchasing basic toolboxes,” he says. “At the same time, pickup truck owners continue

to expect their vehicles to serve multiple purposes for work, recreation and travel. This has increased demand for truck bed storage systems that maximize carrying capacity without sacrificing usability."

Many versatile cargo products are a hit with consumers because they deliver function and value.

"Most people do not want things laying or rolling around in their vehicle for multiple reasons," says Joey Scelza, senior manager – retail sales for RealTruck. "Innovation in a heavily saturated market has proven difficult; however, RealTruck has continued to deliver innovative and new products."

Utility is a key factor, notes Jeff Jeglewicz, domestic sales manager for Tmat Products LLC.

"The truck is no longer just a work vehicle; it's a lifestyle vehicle, so owners need accessories that accommodate work and play," he says.

The systems also make many SUVs and EVs more capable and versatile.

"As fuel prices rise, people are changing to more fuel-efficient vehicles, smaller vehicles or electric vehicles," says Garrett Barnum, director of product strategy for Yakima Products. "Cargo carriers are a great way to still take all the stuff you need, but with a smaller vehicle. Our hitch-mounted cargo carriers like the EXO System are also a more fuel-efficient option, since they have less mileage impact behind the car, as opposed to on the roof."

YEAR-ROUND APPEAL

Modern outdoor enthusiasts have activities planned throughout the year, meaning any day is a good day to propose a toolbox or cargo carrier purchase.

"Many shops assume cargo boxes are a seasonal product or only appeal to skiers," says Metcalf. "Today's customers use rooftop cargo boxes year-round for camping gear, recovery equipment, hunting and fishing gear, family travel and everyday storage. When displayed properly, cargo boxes appeal to a much broader customer base than many retailers realize."

The products create a standalone category that makes sense for many drivers.

"The common misconception is that these are 'add-on' sales to a bigger purchase and not a need or problem that needs to be solved," says Scelza. "Approaching the customer with an 'add-on' sale and not

ROUGH COUNTRY SLIDE-OUT CARGO TRAYS

RUGGED DURABILITY + EASY ACCESS



DURABLE CONSTRUCTION



EFFORTLESS INSTALLATION



3-YEAR WARRANTY

COMPLETE STORAGE ACCESSORY LINEUP



MOLLE PANEL KITS



UNDER SEAT
STORAGE BINS



TRUCK BED
CARGO TRAYS



ROOF RACKS
& STORAGE BAGS



PICKUP TRUCK
BED RACKS



BED COVERS



Become a Rough Country Dealer Today!
www.roughcountry.com/dealer-program
800-222-7023 | ROUGHOUNTRY.COM

Cargo boxes are a highly visual product, and customers are much more likely to make a purchase when they can see the size, finish and features in person. (Photo courtesy Küat)



presenting them with a solution to their current cargo problem makes for a non-sale at the counter.”

Savasta sees customers who are more interested in purchasing the best system for their needs, rather than the cheapest option.

“Many contractors, fleet operators and outdoor enthusiasts are willing to invest in premium products when the value is clearly demonstrated. Customers are often more concerned with organization, security, durability, weather protection and ease of access than simply finding the lowest price,” he notes. “The best shops recognize that the right toolbox depends on the customer’s truck configuration, bed length, tonneau cover compatibility and how the vehicle is used every day. Also, recom-

mending complementary products such as bed mats, cargo management systems and ladder racks can improve functionality while increasing the overall sale. Position toolboxes as assets that will live for the life of the truck.”

Shops can sell individualized solutions that meet the demands of specific use cases.

“Proper fitment matters, but so does understanding how the customer uses the truck, what they carry, how frequently they access their tools and whether they use other bed accessories,” says Feeney. “Helping customers select the right size, profile, access style, material and finish can make a significant difference in long-term satisfaction.”

Shops should set aside a “universal fit”

mindset for customized solutions.

“Modern truck beds vary widely in dimensions, tailgate clearances and linear types,” says Noonan. “Successful shops treat every installation as a holistic system consultation—evaluating bed length, payload needs and accessory compatibility (like bed covers or racks) to sell a seamless solution rather than just an off-the-shelf part.”

And yes, there are real deciding factors for consumers to consider.

“Many consumers think all cargo boxes are basically the same, but there are some significant differences. Products like the Thule Motion 3 stand out with better aerodynamics, easier installation, improved vehicle fit, more convenient loading and unloading, enhanced security and greater long-term durability,” says Stevens. “Those differences add up to a better overall experience every time the box is used.”

For the shops themselves, Jegelewicz explains that it is not difficult to learn the features and benefits of the systems and how to sell accessories. Also, most installations are straightforward.

Meanwhile, the temporary, versatile nature of many cargo solutions is another selling point.

“Our hitch-mounted and roof-mounted cargo carriers are not permanently attached to vehicles,” notes Barnum. “They are easy to remove and store when not in use. And almost any cargo carrier can be transferred to a customer’s next vehicle when they buy a new one.”



The products are a hit with consumers because they deliver function and value. (Photo courtesy RealTruck)

BOX IT UP

Count Kūat's Metcalf among those who recommend creating a cargo solutions area in the shop's showroom.

"Cargo boxes are a highly visual product, and customers are much more likely to purchase one when they can see the size, finish and features in person," he says. "A showroom display sparks conversations, helps customers visualize the product on their own vehicle and creates opportunities to bundle additional accessories like crossbars, bed racks, roof platforms and bike racks—all of which can increase the overall sale."

Show, don't just tell, says Noonan.

"Merchandise a DECKED system on a floor display with actual gear and tools in the drawers, toolbox or bins," she suggests. "When a customer opens a drawer and feels the smooth pull and sees how much bed space remains on top, it practically sells itself."

Feeney from UWS advises asking basic application-based questions before recommending a product.

"Find out what the customer carries, how



Cargo carriers are a simple, efficient way to add space when you need it. (Photo courtesy Thule Group)

often they need access, whether they wear gloves on the job and what other accessories are installed or planned for the truck bed (i.e. future tonneau cover upgrades, headache racks, etc.)," she suggests. "Shops can then sell the right storage solution, provide professional installation and identify opportunities for complementary cargo-manage-

ment or truck bed accessories."

When faced with multiple options, shops can take a minute to visualize the most common use case with the customer and make sure the toolbox choice is appropriate, says Savasta from Westin Automotive.

"Ask how the truck is used, what tools or equipment need to be stored and how often

THE BEST HITCH THEY WILL EVER OWN!

**BULLETPROOF
HITCHES**

JOIN US AT
SEMA
SHOW

BOOTH #
58097
WEST HALL

BULLETPROOFHITCHES.COM



Toolboxes & cargo carriers increase the capability and versatility of smaller vehicles. (Photo courtesy Yakima Products)

those items are accessed during the day. It really matters—side access, top access, cross-bed access and side rail access all have strengths and weaknesses, depending on the frequency of use and the size and the weight of what will be stowed,” he explains. “Be sure to highlight premium features such as heavy-duty aluminum construction, weather-resistant seals, secure locking systems, corrosion resistance and American-made quality.”

Stevens suggests starting with a discussion of the customer’s travel habits rather than immediately recommending a specific product.

“Understanding whether they’re carrying camping gear, skis, strollers, luggage or sports equipment typically leads to a better product recommendation and creates opportunities to offer a complete solution that includes crossbars, locks and other accessories,” he reveals.

NEW OFF-ROAD ENTRY: THE 2027 TOYOTA SEQUOIA TRAILHUNTER PACKAGE

Toyota is jumping into the off-road-enhanced SUV market with its 2027 Sequoia Trailhunter package. Delivering a new look, advanced technology and expanded capability to better serve active families and adventure-minded customers, the full-size offering is suited to both everyday driving and outdoor exploration.

Developed by Toyota Motor North America teams, including Toyota’s CALTY Design Research in Ann Arbor, Michigan, Sequoia’s updated design expresses a premium, modern and purpose-driven character.

The Trailhunter package brings an even more trail-ready personality. Based on the SR5 grade, the package adds Michelin LTX Trail 265/70R18 tires, an Old Man Emu upgraded suspension, front recovery hooks and underbody protection to help support travel across more challenging terrain.

Multi-Terrain Select, Crawl Control and a locking rear differential add greater control and traction in demanding over-landing conditions, while unique bronze-colored wheels and exclusive badges give the package a distinct appearance.

Toyota is jumping into the off-road-enhanced SUV market with its 2027 Sequoia Trailhunter package. (Photos courtesy Toyota)



Truck owners look for accessories that accommodate work and play. (Photo courtesy Tmat)



Once the customer is ready to buy, “look for accessories like Tmat because it is in high demand, it’s easy to install and every truck owner has a use for it,” says Jegelewicz.

RealTruck’s Scelza sees advantages in suggesting the solutions when installing other accessories.

“Continue to find innovative ways to sell these products to boost sales and boost profitability on the overall purchase,” he says. “They should be offered and talked about during the time you have the

customer there with you, ready to purchase other products. Create more touchpoints with the consumer and find more ways to bring the consumer back to the shop for more selling opportunities.”

Barnum from Yakima Products says shops “can sell cargo carriers to anyone. They are good products for a wide range of people with almost any vehicle—any vehicle with a 2-inch hitch receiver can use a hitch-mounted cargo carrier. Any vehicle with crossbars on the roof will accept a roof cargo carrier.” **TS**



Contractors, fleet operators and outdoor enthusiasts are willing to invest in premium products when the value is clearly demonstrated. (Photo courtesy Westin Automotive)



OUTBACK™

REAR DOOR SYSTEM

Less frame. More function.
Way more storage.



More usable space
rear door storage that actually works



DryBox Drain + Vent™
give wet & dirty gear a place to dry



Modular by design
your van, your gear, your way



Built in Idaho
Built to last
from the first cut to the final weld



Ready for adventure
from jobsites to campsites



DISCOVER MORE



Scan to explore configurations, fitment, and product details.

VANCOMPASS.COM
(208) 500-3781

JOIN US AT **SEMA** BOOTH # 58097 WEST HALL

The Trails Are Calling

Reports: Off-road culture continues to drive consumer spending.



When it comes to aftermarket spending and support, all trails apparently lead to success these days.

The Off-Road Business Association (ORBA) is highlighting new market research that shows how automotive consumers continue to be drawn to the aspirational vibes of motorized off-road recreation, with modified pickups and SUVs driving a significant segment of the automotive aftermarket.

The trend, officials say, represents a culture of American grit and individual expression embodied in adventure.

Parts for pickups remain the largest catalyst for spending in the aftermarket accessories and performance categories, making up 30% of sales. In 2025 alone, truck owners spent more than \$15 billion modifying their vehicles for off-road, utility and recreational use, according to the research, making it the leading contributor to an overall \$52.92 billion in sales of aftermarket accessories and performance parts last year.

The insights come from the 2026

SEMA Market Report, which was compiled by the Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) utilizing a variety of data sources, including interviews with industry sources, consumer surveys, secondary data sources and government statistics. ORBA is a wholly owned subsidiary of SEMA.

"You can't watch TV for a meaningful period of time without seeing an ad where automakers showcase their vehicles ripping through an off-road environment, and that continues to be reflected in how consumers are spending to modify their vehicles for recreational use on public lands and beyond highway driving," says Gavin Knapp, SEMA director of market research. "The off-road ethos has a huge impact on the specialty equipment market, as people love the look and capabilities that off-road upgrades can bring to their vehicles."

A PICKUP'S WORTH OF POTENTIAL

The report identified three important market trends that spotlight the strength of the off-road industry:



Off-roading represents a culture of American grit and individual expression—much like this one-of-a-kind 1968 Ford Bronco custom restomod from restoration specialist ICON 4x4. (Photos courtesy ICON 4x4)



2.7 Coilover

Performance Suspension

Engineered for drivers who push their rigs harder and demand more.

Race Proven Technology

DIGRESSIVE DAMPING

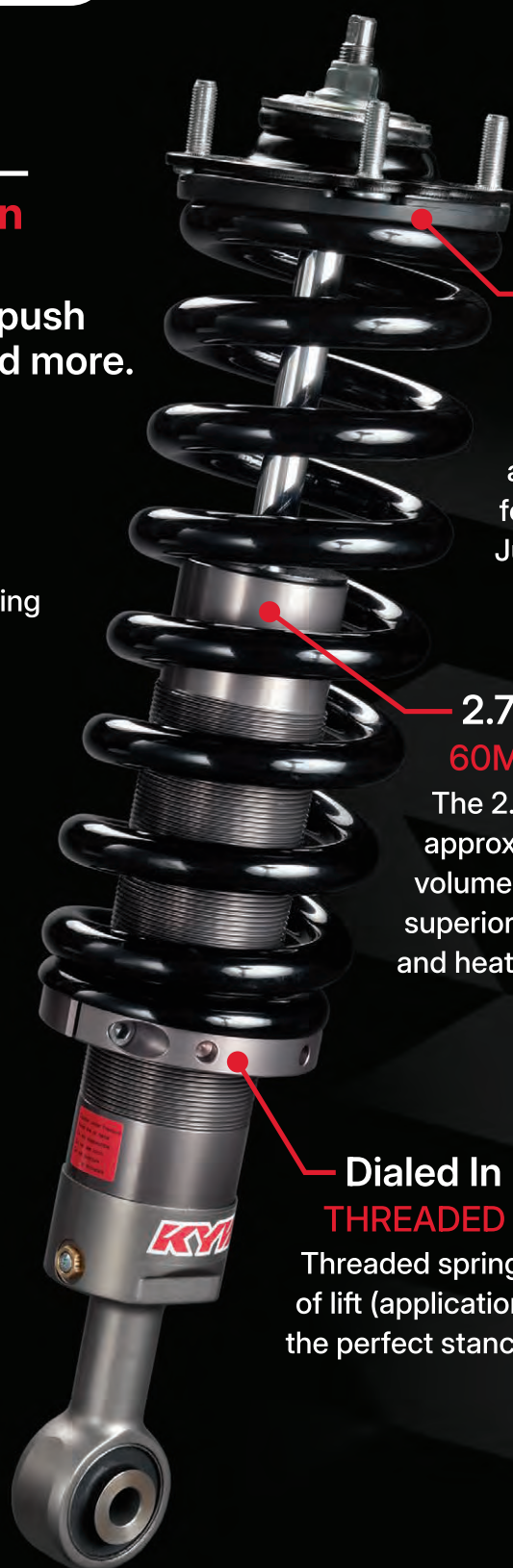
Digressive valving delivers high damping force for confident on-road handling and soaks up the hits off-road.



Premium Build & Finish

TYPE III HARDCOAT ANODIZED

6061-T6 aluminum body provides significantly better wear resistance, corrosion protection, and thermal management compared to Type II finishes.



Vehicle-Specific Top Mount

OE QUALITY

Designed and fully assembled specifically for your application. Just bolt on and go.

2.7" Shock Body

60MM PISTON

The 2.7" shock body holds approx. 17% more volume than a 2.5" body for superior damping performance and heat dissipation.

Dialed In Height

THREADED SPRING SEAT

Threaded spring seat allows up to 3" of lift (application dependent) to dial in the perfect stance and clear larger tires.



OFF-ROAD INTEREST RISING ACROSS US



This summer found Americans eager to get off the pavement and into the wilderness. The latest Hankook Gauge Index finds that nearly two-thirds (64%) of U.S. drivers are interested in taking an all-terrain or off-road driving trip—almost double the number who expressed interest last year (34%).

Younger drivers show the highest enthusiasm for adventure driving, with nearly three-quarters of Gen Z (74%) and millennials (72%) saying they are interested in an off-road excursion. Interest is less robust among older generations; however, more than half of Gen X drivers (57%) say they would enjoy an off-road adventure drive, and 4-in-10 (42%) baby boomers are looking for the thrill of off-roading.

Wooded Trails Win the All-Terrain Domain

An all-terrain excursion could mean driving through wooded trails, tackling sand or desert terrain, climbing rocky landscapes or powering through wet and muddy conditions. Nearly half (45%) of those surveyed prefer wooded trails by a wide margin, followed by desert driving at 17%.

More experienced drivers show a stronger preference for forested routes, with Gen X (50%) and boomers (49%) more likely to choose wooded trails than Gen Z (39%) or millennials (43%). At the same time, younger drivers are more interested in a different landscape, with Gen Z (20%) and millennials (21%) more likely than older generations to opt for a desert environment.

Off-Roaders Prefer SUVs & ICE Power

When asked what their ideal vehicle would be for an off-road trip, more than half (52%) of drivers say they would take an SUV, versus 36% who would opt for a pickup truck.

Meanwhile, across vehicle types including SUVs, pickups and sedans, drivers show a clear preference for gas-powered vehicles for off-road use. Nearly 8-in-10 (79%) of those who would choose an SUV prefer a gas-powered one. That jumps to nearly 9-in-10 (87%) for pickup devotees. And 7-in-10 (69%) of those opting for a sedan prefer gas versus electric vehicles.

Off-Road Interest Accelerates Across Generations

The Index shows that interest in off-road adventures is strong among drivers of all ages, especially younger

generations. As more drivers explore wooded trails, desert roads and other all-terrain environments, they consistently identify vehicle choice, powertrain and tire performance, particularly traction across varying surfaces, as essential to their off-road experience.

The Hankook Gauge Index is a survey of Americans' attitudes and opinions about driving, fielded since 2014. The latest survey was conducted June 5-8, polling 1,000 randomly selected American drivers aged 18 and older.



The latest Hankook Gauge Index finds 64% of U.S. drivers are interested in all-terrain or off-road driving adventures. (Photos by Jef White)

1 NEARLY HALF OF AFTERMARKET SALES ARE FOR TRUCKS AND SUVs.

Overall, the performance and accessory aftermarket continues to show strong results, as roughly one-quarter of drivers purchased products within the industry to

personalize their vehicles last year. In 2025, pickup and SUV modifications—the two biggest segments for off-road parts—made up 43% of the \$52.92 billion accessory and performance parts market.

Consumers spent more than \$15 billion last year upgrading their pickups, with

body mods, suspension, and wheels and tires leading the way.

Nearly 13 million pickups were accessorized in 2025 in the U.S. alone.

Meanwhile, roughly one-fourth of pickup (26%) and SUV (21%) accessorizers report using their vehicles for off-road activities.



In 2025, pickup and SUV modifications—the two biggest segments for off-road parts—made up 43% of the \$52.92 billion accessory and performance parts market. (Photo by Jef White)

More than 6 million SUVs were modified in 2025, led by flagship off-road models such as the Jeep Wrangler and Ford Bronco. SUV owners spent over \$7 billion on parts and accessories to make their vehicles look and perform better, ranging from resto-modifications that bring modern safety and comfort capabilities to vintage models, to accessorizing new vehicles to meet a specific lifestyle desire.

Also, CUVs and crossovers saw their accessory market expand to more than \$8 billion in 2025. Utility- and recreation-focused mods including wheels and tires, suspension, lighting and racks all rapidly gained ground in the expanding segment.

2 KEY OFF-ROAD CATEGORIES CONTINUE TO SHOW STRONG SALES IN 2025.

Vehicle owners spent more than \$3 billion on suspension products such as lift kits to upgrade ride and handling, largely for pickups and SUVs. Off-road tires continue to be strong sellers, as pickup and SUV owners bought over \$2 billion worth



FEATURING CARLI'S NEW 3.0 CARLI-SPEC DOMINATOR SHOCKS & LIGHT BAR DEVELOPED EXCLUSIVELY BY CARLI



JOIN US AT
SEMA
BOOTH #
58097
WEST HALL



CARLISUSPENSION.COM



New market research shows consumers continue to be drawn to the aspirational vibes of motorized off-road recreation. (Photo courtesy ICON 4x4)

of oversized rubber to improve clearance. Pickups, SUVs and CUVs also lead the way in sales of products such as racks and carriers, towing products and accessory lighting that are all integral to off-roading, overlanding and outdoor recreation.

With light-duty pickups, SUVs and CUVs making up nearly two-thirds of the 300 million passenger vehicles on U.S. roads, the off-road accessorizing market continues to show its strength.

3 YOUNGER CONSUMERS CONTINUE TO BE KEY DRIVERS OF THE INDUSTRY.

More than half of accessory and performance parts buyers are under the age of 40 years old, according to the report, and younger buyers are also more likely to

engage in complicated builds focusing on hardcore performance parts.

Cross-ownership is also a significant factor for the off-road community. Over half of accessorizers also own some kind of sports or recreational vehicle (compared with 40% of non-accessorizers). This includes motorcycles, side-by-sides and dune buggies, further enhancing their connections to the off-road and outdoor lifestyle.

A MARKET WORTH INVESTIGATING

The 4x4/overlanding market is an opportunity worth investigating for restyling and performance shops. Motorized off-road recreation is more than an in-demand image; the industry has significant financial clout.

Outdoor recreation on federal public lands and waters fuels America's economy. Each

day, research shows outdoor recreation on federal lands and waters:

- Adds \$351 million to the U.S. economy—the equivalent to hosting eight Super Bowls every month in economic impact
- Directly contributes at least a half-billion dollars annually to federal coffers through receipts, permits, entrance fees, leases and other payments
- Returns \$128 billion in economic activity and nearly \$6 billion in federal tax revenue while making significant contributions to the physical and mental health of Americans
- Supports 5 million American jobs—one-in-five of which is dependent on federal public lands

Findings show that motorized outdoor recreation delivers \$720 billion in economic impact. The off-road segment of the automotive aftermarket is similarly impressive, generating \$12 billion in annual economic impact.

Meanwhile, the companies that support this segment of the automotive aftermarket are overwhelmingly small businesses, often employing U.S. manufacturing.

“Many entered the aftermarket industry as enthusiasts and today lead the charge as entrepreneurs and examples of the American dream, where a great idea brought to market can reach consumers and generate prosperity for individuals and surrounding communities,” the report summary notes.

A wholly owned subsidiary of SEMA, ORBA provides leadership in addressing land use issues by advancing policies that conserve the environment while at the same time providing off-road recreation opportunities. **TS**



Motorized off-road recreation is more than an in-demand image – the industry has significant financial clout.
(Photos by Jef White)



STEERING PROBLEMS?

We Build the Solution

On-road & off-road steering systems engineered to last. Proven to perform.

Dealer Inquiries Welcome

PSCSTEERING.COM



Taking Customer Relationships to New Heights

Building strong client connections requires constant consideration & care.

BY JOSH POULSON

RESTYLING/AFTERMARKET ACCESSORIES



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 immediate past-chairman of the SEMA PRO council.

Relationships with your customers are the most important part of sales—especially if you are selling to car dealers or other business-to-business (B2B) customers. Why is that, and how can you ensure those relationships are successful?

WHY ARE RELATIONSHIPS IMPORTANT?

In any type of sales or service industry, the products or services offered among competitors are usually very similar, if not entirely the same. Pricing, too, is often in line with

other companies, as they each try to win business or make themselves competitive.

So, what is it that will help you get over the top and gain continual repeat business from your customers?

It's your relationships.

We've heard many times that the automotive aftermarket is a "relationship business," and that is truer now than ever. When you not only provide a quality product or service at a fair price, but also do it in a way that makes it easy time after time and then, when an issue or problem does come up, you handle it professionally, your customers are much more likely to do business with you.

HOW TO BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

Just like it sounds, building anything takes time. If you were to build a wall, for instance, you would have to start at the bottom and build a foundation and then, piece by piece, you'd start to construct.

It isn't until you've been working for a while that you can actually step back and begin to see some of the results of your construction project. And it's the same with building a relationship with your

Building customer relationships is just like building anything else—you start at the bottom with a strong foundation and then consistently add to it. (Photo by Jef White)

customers—it starts from scratch and slowly (sometimes, painfully slowly) grows over time.

However, there are some secrets that can help make sure you capitalize as you continue to grow:

SECRET 1:

MAKE IT EASY

We all know about the so-called "Easy" button. The reason that resonates with us is because it's true—we all appreciate when buying something is as easy as pushing a button.

So, take a step back and put yourself in your customer's shoes. How "easy" is it to do business with you and your company? Is it easy to get information when needed? Is it easy to get the correct price or quote? Is it easy for them to then turn



Take time to understand your customers' needs and then work to fulfill them.
(Photo by Jef White)

around and present that information to their retail customer? Is it easy to schedule or coordinate? Is it easy to get a problem handled when it arises? Is it easy to get paperwork (digital or physical) to flow smoothly?

How easy is it to do business with you? If it's not as easy as it could be, then what can you do to fix it? Perhaps suggestions from

your customers or others in the industry can help.

Meanwhile, if you answered "yes" to all of these questions and you really do make things easy, then (loudly) sell this fact to your customers. Make sure they know how easy it is to do business with you, and provide examples.

SECRET 2:

PUT TIME INTO IT

Aftermarket restylers can't just snap their fingers and have relationships be in full bloom. It takes time and effort.

This usually includes visiting your customers in person—sometimes even when

ICON PERFORMANCE FOR GMC & CHEVY HD!

ICON Performance Suspension Systems are engineered to unlock every ounce of capability in the new GM 2500/3500 Heavy Duty trucks, delivering confident control and a smoother ride whether you're hauling on the job site or hammering down the trail.

JOIN US AT **SEMA** BOOTH # 58097 WEST HALL



ICON VEHICLE DYNAMICS®
PERFORMANCE SUSPENSION SYSTEMS AND SHOCK ABSORBERS



ICONVEHICLEDYNAMICS.COM

BATTLE OF THE BUILDERS ADDS NEW BIKE BUILDER SHOOTOUT

The SEMA Show's most popular build competition has expanded to include two-wheeled vehicles with the all-new SEMA Battle of the Builders: Bike Builder Shootout.

For more than a decade, SEMA Battle of the Builders presented by Mothers has recognized the industry's most talented vehicle builders, providing a platform to showcase the creativity, craftsmanship and innovation behind high-level custom builds. For the 2026 version, the competition will expand its reach to include motorcycles, giving custom bike builders a dedicated opportunity to compete and earn recognition on the industry's biggest stage.

"Motorcycles have always been a vital part of the customization community, and we're excited to officially bring these builders into the SEMA Battle of the Builders spotlight," says RJ de Vera, vice president of marketing for the Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA). "The Bike Builder Shootout creates a new platform for motorcycle builders to showcase their craftsmanship, creativity and passion while competing alongside some of the most talented custom bike builders in the industry."

The dedicated motorcycle competition is designed to recognize standout custom bikes from builders across the country. Entries will be evaluated by a panel of motorcycle industry experts based on craftsmanship, design innovation and overall execution.

The inaugural judging panel will include Zach Ness of Arlen Ness Motorcycles, Jeff Holt of V-Twin Visionary and Pat Patterson of Led Sled Customs—three respected leaders in the custom motorcycle community with decades of combined experience building, designing and promoting biker culture.

Motorcycle judges will review submissions before selecting the Top 10 finalists. Those finalists will then help determine the Top 3 category winners and select the overall Bike



The popular SEMA Battle of the Builders competition is expanding in 2026 to include a motorcycle category. (Photo courtesy Specialty Equipment Market Association)

Builder Shootout champion, creating a competition judged by the builders and industry experts who understand the craft firsthand.

"The motorcycle community has always been built on creativity, craftsmanship and a passion for creating something unique," says Bob Kay, judge chairman. "The Bike Builder Shootout gives builders a dedicated platform to showcase the time, skill and innovation behind their machines while being recognized alongside some of the most talented builders in the industry. We're excited to be part of a program that celebrates the people pushing motorcycle customization forward."

The new Motorcycle category joins the four existing Battle of the Builders automotive competition classes: Hot Rod & Hot Rod Truck; 4 Wheel Drive & Off-Road; Sport Compact, Import Performance, Luxury & Exotic; and BF Goodrich Young Guns.

Attendees at the 2026 SEMA Show, set for Nov. 3-6 in Las Vegas, can find all the entrants in the Battle of the Builders area in the Central Hall.



When relationships are strong, customers will come to you first. (Photo by Jef White)

you don't have anything to sell them. It requires good communication, which takes time. It isn't about just giving a price, but actually listening to what their real needs are

and trying to accommodate when you can.

Taking phone calls or texts after hours or answering an email at an inconvenient time is simply a cost of doing business

in our modern world. I can't tell you how many times I've heard, "Hi Josh, I know you aren't working but I have a quick question..." Whether it was on a weekend or during a vacation or trip out of town, my customers knew they could still count on me.

Putting time into customer relationships can sometimes mean doing a bit of heavy lifting for them. Focus on customer service as much as possible, and if you're missing a small piece of information, try to get it without their help.

Look for any way you can facilitate the sale to make it easier on them.

One example that comes to mind was when a dealer once wanted to give me a package to do on a truck. It was his idea and after we discussed it, he said he would send me the info for the type of truck he wanted to do.



How “easy” is it to do business with you and your company? What can you do to make it easier? (Photo by Jef White)

He, of course, got busy and never got back to me. But, instead of calling and asking him for the information, I decided to just go to the dealership and walk his inventory and help him find the right one.

What I realized is that he had a lot of choices and didn't have the time to go through his inventory. Me doing that “heavy lift” for him finalized the sale quicker and easier than if I would have just waited. So, how can you spend time building your relationships?

SECRET 3:

TRY NOT TO SAY ‘NO’

I used to say I wanted to be the “Yellow Pages” for all my customers, but then phone books disappeared, so I changed it to say I wanted to be the “Google” for our clients. These days, of course, I have to say that I want to be the “AI” or the “ChatGPT” for my customers.

It all references the same mindset—mainly, that whatever their need, they ask me first and either I can do it for them or I can give them a reference. And if it can't be done, I explain why and, by the end of the conversation, they have given up on the idea instead of calling around to my competitors.

With strong relationships, those customers trust me because of the extra miles I have gone for them in the past. So, if it is in your power to help them—even if the request is out of the ordinary—try to do what you can. And if you can't do it, make sure they understand why.

The goal is to become their source of information and, by doing so, continue to grow the relationship.

Finally, this same principle applies to handling issues when they arise. If there's anything you can do to ease their pain or

take more of the blame than you probably deserve, by all means do it and know that you will get that money or business back as you grow the relationship.

I understand that sometimes you have to stick to your guns during a disagreement, but even when you have to do that, can you lessen the blow by offering some other solution or a way for them to make up the loss in the future? Anytime you can work with your customers instead of against them you will grow the relationship.

SOLID RELATIONSHIPS

How will you know when you've built a solid relationship? The answer is, you'll just know!

Sometimes customers will directly mention things you've done, showing their appreciation. Other times you may find out from your competitors or your staff that the relationship is good.

In the end, it will be found in the numbers—the sales or the referrals that you gain as a result or working with a dealership or wholesale client. **TS**



Automotive Grade Trims and Seals

Made in the USA!

In-Stock & Ready-to-Ship!
Custom Design Assistance Available

CALL US TODAY
800-543-8706

www.trimlok.com • info@trimlok.com



Certified System
ISO 9001

Certified System
IATF 16949



STILL
SKY HIGH

How aftermarket sunroofs continue to drive profits for dealers & restylers.

BY DINO PERFETTI | PHOTOS COURTESY AUTOMOTIVE CONCEPTS



Dino Perfetti is a 30-plus-year veteran of the automotive aftermarket and a recent past chairman of the SEMA PRO Council. He is engaged with several industry professionals

with visions of increasing the opportunities to bring products to market through car dealerships. Having joined Automotive Concepts in 2008, he is the president, leading a team in customizing vehicles for over 250 dealerships throughout the Midwest. Contact him at dino@ac-mn.com.

In an automotive industry constantly chasing the next trend, one product category has quietly continued generating profits for decades: aftermarket power sunroofs.

Here at Automotive Concepts in New Hope, Minnesota, aftermarket sunroofs have remained a strong part of our business for nearly 40 years. While vehicle technology continues to evolve, consumer demand for open-air driving and natural light inside the cabin has never gone away.

"People still love sunroofs," says Rick Bach, longtime installer at Automotive Concepts. "Customers get excited when they realize they can add the feature they really want

without moving into a much more expensive trim package."

That creates a major opportunity for dealerships.

Today, factory sunroofs are often tied to expensive upper-level packages that add thousands of dollars to the vehicle price. A professionally installed aftermarket power sunroof allows dealerships to keep customers within budget while still delivering the features they want.

WINDOWS OF OPPORTUNITY

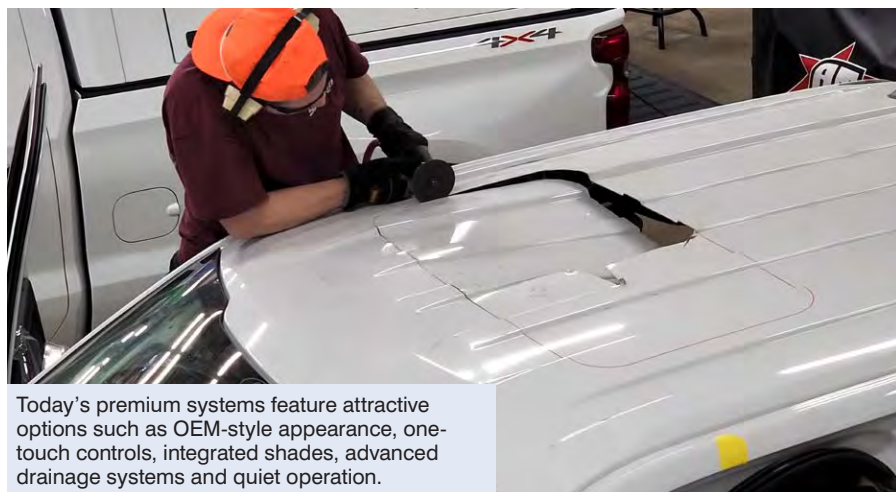
Modern systems have come a long way from the old aftermarket roofs many people

A professionally installed aftermarket power sunroof allows dealerships to keep customers within budget while still delivering the features they want.

remember. Today's premium systems feature OEM-style appearance, one-touch controls, integrated shades, advanced drainage systems and quiet operation.

Many of the systems installed at Automotive Concepts are supplied by Champion Auto Systems, which offers several popular roof configurations, including:

- H1000 panoramic series
- H700 tilt-and-slide system
- H321 large spoiler-style sunroof



Today's premium systems feature attractive options such as OEM-style appearance, one-touch controls, integrated shades, advanced drainage systems and quiet operation.

“Not every customer wants or can afford the highest factory trim level,” says Bill North, president of Champion Auto Systems. “Aftermarket sunroofs give dealerships flexibility while helping customers stay in a comfortable payment range.”

The used-car market presents another major opportunity. Adding a power sunroof can dramatically improve the appearance and perceived value of pre-owned inventory, especially online where vehicles compete for attention.

“A vehicle with a sunroof simply stands out,” says North. “It creates emotion and helps attract buyers.”

A CLEAR PLAN OF ACTION

For aftermarket restyling shops looking to add sunroofs to dealer inventory, quality installation remains critical.

“Anybody can cut a hole in a roof,” Bach says. “The difference is making it look and perform like it came from the factory.”

For dealerships, sunroofs often become the starting point for larger accessory programs involving leather interiors, add-on



Sunroofs can be the starting point for larger accessory programs involving leather interiors, add-on accessories, lift kits, wheels, technology upgrades and full customization packages.

accessories, lift kits, wheels, technology upgrades and full customization packages customers can choose from.

As vehicle prices continue to rise, aftermarket power sunroofs remain one of the industry’s most proven ways to add excite-

ment, improve inventory flexibility and generate additional profits.

Sometimes the best opportunities are not the newest trends at all. Sometimes they are the products that continue delivering results year after year. **TS**

Ranked
Best Glass Cleaner
CR Consumer Reports

Become a Distributor

Sprayway rated as the Best Glass Cleaner by Consumer Reports

Consumer Reports does not endorse products or services.

https://reprints.theygsgroup.com/cr/reprints/BestGlassCleaners_2026.pdf



RESTYLING PRODUCTS

Parts To Accessorize
Any Ride

RESTYLING/AFTERMARKET ACCESSORIES



Heavy-Duty Truck Bed Rack

Yakima Products, Lake Oswego, Oregon, presents its OutPost HD System, a mid-height, heavy-duty truck bed rack designed to handle heavy loads on backcountry terrain. The rack is built for rugged overland adventures, featuring a 500-pound on-road and 300-pound off-road weight capacity with multiple tie-down points.

2024-25 Lexus GX550 Springs

Eibach, Corona, California, presents its PRO-LIFT-KIT HD Heavy Duty Rear Springs, now available for 2024-25 Lexus GX550 models. Designed for modified vehicles equipped with heavier loads, the springs can handle a static load of up to 500 pounds over the rear axle. An optimized spring rate allows for more usable bump travel and vehicle control both on- and off-road, while the increased height provides improved ground clearance and room for larger tires. Finished in a heavy-duty, corrosion-resistant coating system, the springs are made in the USA.



Premium Electric Winch

Warrior Winches, Arlington, Texas, presents its all-new Gladiator 12-Volt Electric Winch line. Offering capacities of 8,000-12,500 pounds and line speeds of 27- to 36-feet-per-minute, the winches feature an anti-corrosion coating and have undergone over 480 hours of salt spray testing, ensuring long-lasting performance in marine and coastal environments. Designed to perform in mud, water and dust, they carry an IP68 waterproof rating. Kits include an isolation switch, wired/wireless remote, charging cable, battery leads and mounting hardware.



Brake Enhancement System

Timbren, Whitby, Ontario, presents its BES Brake Enhancement System, a drop-in, complete severe-duty brake upgrade kit that eliminates trailer push, fights brake fade and improves safety for pickups under load. The system includes proprietary OnyxBond heat-resistant coated rotors rated up to 932 degrees and OnyxBite high-friction, low-metallic severe-duty brake pads. The system eliminates the spongy pedal feel and thermal warping often found in standard OEM brake setups.

Bronco Lift Kit

Pacbrake, Langley, British Columbia, presents its 2.0-inch Lift Kit for 2021-25 Ford Bronco 4WD applications. Designed for on- and off-road clearance, stance and durability, the kits deliver a bold, lifted stance with the strength and performance needed for real-world driving. Components are engineered for long-lasting confidence and easy installation.



Trailer Wheel

Method Race Wheels, Santa Fe Springs, California, presents its new 305-HD Trailer Wheel. Designed for greater strength, durability and style, the heavy-duty trailer wheel is offered in 16-inch 6-lug and 8-lug fitments (with a 15-inch option coming soon). It features a 12-window design finished in matte black and can be used when towing trailers hauling UTVs, boats, campers and more. Constructed from solid A356 aluminum with T6 heat treatment, the 305-HD is engineered to handle serious payloads.



All-Season Highway Tire

Yokohama Tire, Santa Ana, California, presents its GEOLANDAR H/T4 all-season highway tire. Engineered for light trucks, SUVs and commercial vans, the tire is available in 62 sizes, ranging from 15- to 22-inch wheel diameters. Built to provide on-road durability with a smooth, quiet ride, it includes dual lug grooves and wide circumferential grooves that have sharp block edges to enhance snow traction without sacrificing wet performance. The large center blocks improve traction and grip in varying conditions.

Toyota 4Runner HD Tie Rods

ICON Vehicle Dynamics, Riverside, California, presents its Heavy-Duty XD Tie Rods for 2010-24 Toyota 4Runner applications. Designed as part of a full steering system upgrade strategy, kits include an inner tie rod and ball stud CNC-machined from 4140 chromoly with metal-on-metal bearing surfaces for durability beyond factory components. The adjustment threads are 12% larger in diameter compared to stock units for additional strength. The outer tie rod is forged steel and has the same profile as factory tie rods, allowing it to fit OEM wheel diameters and offsets, along with aftermarket wheels.



Color Paint Protection Film

Avery Dennison Graphics Solutions, Mentor, Ohio, presents its PrismaPro Color Paint Protection Film. The new film combines custom color options with the robust 8.5-mil protection of a premium PPF, all in a highly efficient dry-apply application. Featuring the new IntelliTack adhesive system, PrismaPro

allows professional wrap installers to deliver premium vehicle protection and striking aesthetics without the dry time and installation complexities associated with traditional wet-apply films. The PPF is offered in a 60-inch-by-75-foot roll size.



Aluminum Wheel Line

Titan International, Quincy, Illinois, presents its expanded Black Rock-branded Styled Wheels portfolio, featuring a new lineup of aluminum wheels designed for today's trucks, SUVs and Jeeps. Balancing durability, fitment flexibility and bold, modern styling, the off-road wheels are built for real-world use. The new wheel lineup includes multiple series, sizes and finishes, including Gloss Black, Satin Black, Bronze and Gloss Silver Full Mach, offering a mix of classic and contemporary styles in 17-, 18- and 20-inch diameters.



Tundra Leveling Kit

Tuff Country EZ-Ride Suspension, West Jordan, Utah, presents a Front Leveling Kit for Toyota Tundra 4WD models. The 2.5-inch front lift kit does not include shocks and is designed to create extra clearance for larger tires while preserving a comfortable ride. High-lights include improved stance and fender clearance, billet aluminum construction and easy installation.



4Runner Headlights

ORACLE Lighting, Metairie, Louisiana, presents its Lensless LED Headlights, now available for fifth-generation Toyota 4Runners. The no-lens design removes the traditional polycarbonate lens and replaces it with a modular system of sealed LED emitter pods integrated directly into the headlight housing. Each emitter module contains precision optics

constructed from ballistics-grade PMMA acrylic, delivering improved optical clarity and impact resistance. The modular system allows individual components to be serviced or replaced. **TS**



PROTECT YOUR ENGINE



HIGH PERFORMANCE OIL PANS
FOR MAXIMUM OIL CONTROL AND HORSEPOWER SAVINGS

SUPERIOR TRAP DOOR BAFFLING, CRANKSCRAPERS, AND WINDAGE TRAYS

CHOOSE FROM A LARGE SELECTION OF OUR OIL PANS FOR ALL OF YOUR RACING NEEDS



OIL PANS OIL ADAPTERS MAIN SUPPORTS WINDAGE TRAYS

CantonRacingProducts.com



American Autowire

*Vintage Rides,
Modern Wiring*

**American Autowire
Classic Update
Kits**



1.800.482.9473
americanautowire.com



DISC BRAKES

wilwood

**AERO6-DM
DIRECT MOUNT
BRAKE KITS**



FOR SELECT TRUCKS AND SUVs

Instagram YouTube Facebook Twitter Instagram

wilwood.com
805.388.1188



DISC BRAKES

wilwood

ESTABLISHED 1977



WE COVER ALL YOUR FLEET NEEDS.



TRI-STATE ENTERPRISES, INC.

Contact us **TODAY** for more information
(469) 208-7208



GAME CHANGERS

FOR SHOP OWNERS & AUTO MANUFACTURERS

> 7 station 50 ton Ironworker. Save time with the 3-Station revolving turret punch.



> Dual Belt Sander. Rugged, solution for Sanding and Buffing.



www.scotchman.com

Scotchman

Call for a quote today: 605-859-2542

SOFT TOPS GO HARD



Bestop

TONNEAU COVERS

EZ ROLL **THE FABRIC EXPERTS**
For over 70 years, Bestop has set the standard in premium soft tops. Now we're bringing that same fabric expertise to your truck bed.

EZ FOLD



EZ FOLD

SCAN TO LEARN MORE



LEADING THE HEARD SINCE 1978

BORLA® EXHAUST

1.877.GOBORLA | borla.com/installer

STEERING PROBLEMS?

Solutions are what we do



One stop for
aftermarket steering
solutions



Steering Re-Engineered
PSCSTEERING.COM

HOOVER Products

PRES-N-SNAP
INSTALLS SNAPS & GROMMETS



Installs snaps and grommets
easily into canvas and vinyl

Versatile and easy to use
Pres-N-Snap

Capable of setting numerous
brands of fasteners
simply by changing dies

Heat-treated cast aluminum
makes it both lightweight
and durable

Pres-N-Snap and all components
are proudly made in the USA

951-654-4627 • Hooverproducts.com



ENTRY AND EXIT
330 LBS.
WEIGHT CAPACITY

■ 5" DROP FOR EASIER ACCESS

Reduces the reach into your truck bed, making it easier to load cargo, retrieve tools, and handle everyday tasks.

■ FOOT-ACTIVATED DEPLOYMENT

A simple push of the foot brings the step into position—no handles, levers, or reaching underneath the vehicle.

■ APPLICATION-SPECIFIC STEP PAD SIZING

Designed with 6" or 5.5" step pads to provide a secure, comfortable foothold for each vehicle application.

WESTIN | **IN STOCK**

WESTINAUTOMOTIVE.COM • SAN DIMAS, CA

SERIOUS PERFORMANCE.
SERIOUS WHOLESALE POWER.



GLOBAL
WHOLESALE
DISTRIBUTOR

POWERED BY **Summit**
RACING EQUIPMENT



SEMA BOOTH #22733
11/3-11/6

AVAILABILITY

Four Locations—Millions of Parts!

SERVICE

Unbeatable Customer Service

SELECTION

Access to Over 1,500
Top-Brands

CONVENIENCE

- FAST, FREE Shipping!
- We Export at Competitive Rates

APPLY
TODAY!

ATECHMOTORSPORTS.COM

Atlas Copco

Industry leading compressed air products.

Now available online.



Evolve with Ecomm.




PRO-TRUCK-LIFT Stage 2
Performance Lift Kit



Available for
2024-2026 TOYOTA TACOMA HYBRID




SLIDE-OUT CARGO TRAY



QUICK & EASY INSTALLATION

3 YEAR LIMITED WARRANTY



Become a Rough Country Dealer Today!
<https://www.roughcountry.com/dealer-program>
800-222-7023 | [ROUGHCOUNTRY.COM](https://www.roughcountry.com)

ROUGH COUNTRY

THE SHOP
For performance, restyling & customization professionals

SUBSCRIBE NOW FOR THE LATEST NEWS & TRENDS FOR THE PERFORMANCE, RESTYLING & VEHICLE CUSTOMIZATION INDUSTRY.




TheDaily



APEX™ WHEEL SERVICE. BUILT SMART. PRICED RIGHT.

NEW



SHOP NOW



BENDPAK.COM/APEX
1-800-253-2363
©2026 BendPak Inc. All rights reserved. • TS3/26



RANDYS

COGNITO **DYNATRAC**
CONFIDENCE TO EXPLORE

Yukon **ICON**
VEHICLE DYNAMICS

ECGS **VANCOMPASS**
EAST COAST GEAR SUPPLY

USA **BULLETPROOF HITCHES** **ZUMBROTA**
DRIVETRAIN

ADAMS DRIVESHAFT **TBC**

VISIT THE BEST BRANDS IN
DRIVETRAIN | SUSPENSION | REMAN | WHEELS

JOIN US AT **SEMA** BOOTH # 58097 WEST HALL
RANDYSWORLDWIDE.COM

ADVERTISER INDEX

ADVERTISER	PAGE #	ADVERTISER	PAGE #	PRODUCTS	PAGE #
ACC Performance/BOSS HOG Torque Converters	23	RANDYS Worldwide	7, 21, 25, 27, 29, 33, 55, 57, 61, 65, 74	Hot Shot's Secret	48
Advanced Clutch Technology Inc	11			ICON Vehicle Dynamics	71
aFe-Advanced FLOW Engineering Inc	45	Rough Country	53, 74	K&N Engineering	49
American Autowire	72	S&S Truck Parts	31	Kwik Performance	48
AMSOIL	IFC	Scotchman Industries.....	72	LEED Brakes.....	39
ATECH Motorsports	73	SEMA	37	Method Race Wheels.....	70
Atlas Copco Compressors.....	73	Silver Sport Transmissions	30	ORACLE Lighting.....	71
Austin Hatcher Foundation.....	43	The Wheel Group.....	IBC	Pacbrake	70
BendPak Inc	9, 74	TrailFX	51	Pedal Commander	49
Bestop Inc	72	Tri-State Enterprises Inc	3, 72	Plews & Edelmann.....	48
Borla Performance Industries	73	Trim-Lok Inc	67	Range Technology	48
Canton Racing Products.....	72	Turn 14 Distribution	BC	Rostar Filters	38
DCM Manufacturing, Inc.....	23	Valvetronic Designs	35	Superchips	48
Eibach Inc.....	74	Westin Automotive Products Inc	73	Timbren.....	70
Highline Warren (owner Sprayway).....	69	Wilwood Disc Brakes.....	13, 72	Titan International	71
HooVer Products	73	PRODUCTS	PAGE #	Total Cost Involved Engineering	39
IDIDIT LLC.....	39	Advanced Clutch Technology (ACT).....	38	TREMEC.....	39
Keystone Automotive Operations Inc.....	15	Air Flow Research (AFR).....	49	Tuff Country EZ-Ride Suspension	71
KYB America LLC.....	59	AMSOIL.....	48	Vortech Superchargers	49
Meyer Distributing	1	Avery Dennison Graphics Solutions	71	Warrior Winches.....	70
Mishimoto	17	AWE	38	Wilwood Disc Brakes.....	39
Motor State Distributing.....	5, 41	BluePrint Engines.....	49	Yakima Products	70
North	INSERT	Custom Autosound	38	Yokohama Tire	71
Orbia Fluor & Energy Materials.....	19	Dynatrac Products.....	38	Yukon Gear & Axle	38
PSC Motorsports	63, 73	Eibach	70	ZyCoat.....	49

The Advertiser Index is intended solely as a convenience for our readers and is not a written or implied part of any advertising commitment. As such, THE SHOP assumes no liabilities for unintentional errors or omissions.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY TO OUR NEWSLETTERS & MAGAZINE

THE SHOP covers the full spectrum of the automotive aftermarket, from performance and racing, to restyling and vehicle customization, to off-road and diesel. If you're in the business of making vehicles run better, look better or work better, then you'll find everything you need to stay in top gear within the pages of **THE SHOP**.

Join to receive the THE SHOP magazine, The Daily eNewsletter, Products & Deals, video content, and more, all for free!

THE SHOP



theshopmag.com/subscribe

Mullin Art Deco Collection Moves to Petersen Museum

Automobiles from the renowned Mullin Collection are now available for viewing at the Petersen Automotive Museum's Vault section, offering an up-close look at what is widely regarded as one of the finest, rarest and most valuable collections of pre-war French automobiles ever assembled.

The Mullin Family Gallery exhibition celebrates the Mullin Family Foundation's landmark gift to the Petersen and fulfills collector, philanthropist and longtime museum champion Peter Mullin's vision that the automotive masterpieces would one day be preserved and shared with the broadest possible audience, according to museum officials.

Over nearly three decades, Peter and Merle Mullin assembled a collection of Bugattis, Delahayes, Delages, Talbot-Lagos, Voisins, Hispano-Suizas and others that celebrated the artistry, innovation and elegance of France's Art Deco era. Together, they founded the Mullin Automotive Museum in Oxnard, California, creating an institution dedicated to preserving and sharing what Peter often described as "sculpture in motion."

Mullin envisioned the Petersen Automotive Museum becoming the steward of the collection, ensuring the standout automobiles would continue inspiring future generations while reaching a global audience in Los Angeles.

"Peter believed these automobiles belonged to history, not to us," says Merle Mullin, cofounder of the Mullin Automotive Museum, trustee of the Mullin Family Foundation, Petersen Automotive Museum board member and internationally respected automotive collector. "Together, we built this collection with the dream of preserving the extraordinary artistry, innovation and craftsmanship of French Art Deco automobiles. It was equally important to us that these masterpieces would one day be shared with the broadest possible audience. Peter always believed the Petersen Automotive Museum was the right steward for that responsibility,



Bugattis, Delahayes, Delages, Talbot-Lagos, Voisins, Hispano-Suizas and other vehicles from the Mullin Collection that celebrate the artistry, innovation and elegance of France's Art Deco era are now on display at the Petersen Automotive Museum in Los Angeles. (Photos by Michael Furman/Courtesy Petersen Automotive Museum)

and it is deeply meaningful to see that vision fulfilled."

The inaugural exhibition, which opened in the Petersen Vault in July, celebrates the Mullin Family Foundation's gift while offering visitors an exclusive first look at many of the collection's most celebrated automobiles in an intimate setting. It also serves as a preview of a larger exhibition planned for 2028.

"It would be difficult to overstate Peter Mullin's impact on the automotive world and on the Petersen Automotive Museum itself," says Terry L. Karges, executive director of the Petersen Automotive Museum. "Peter helped build the museum we know today, and it is

an incredible honor to fulfill his vision by becoming the steward of this extraordinary collection. There is no better place to preserve these remarkable automobiles and share their beauty, history and artistry with visitors from around the world."

Among the vehicles currently on display are the legendary 1937 Delahaye Type 145 "Million Franc Delahaye," the award-winning 1934 Voisin C27 Aerosport Coupe and a selection of Bugatti, Talbot-Lago, Delage, Peugeot and Hispano-Suiza models.

*This article originally appeared online at theshopmag.com. Visit today and sign up for the free daily e-newsletter. **TS***

MAYHEM
W H E E L S

8121

CYCLONE



8 LUG

6 LUG

GLOSS BLACK

LEARN MORE AT:

MAYHEMWHEELS.COM

AVAILABLE IN 20" | 22"

ORDER TODAY

US (866) 894-3351

CAN (877) 326-0933



CORVETTE C5 PERFORMANCE ALUMINUM RADIATOR



MISHIMOTO

YOUR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

The Best Selection of the Biggest Brands, Right at Your Fingertips.

TURN14
DISTRIBUTION

100% WHOLESALE | TURN14.COM

As the premier B2B source for Mishimoto products, Turn 14 Distribution gives you the competitive advantage you need to succeed. Enjoy industry-leading customer support, real-time inventory, flat-rate shipping, and hassle-free returns. All designed to keep your business running smoothly.

Sign up for an account to experience the Turn 14 difference for yourself!

