CANADA EDITION | VOLUME 3, NO. 3 | FALL 2024

# EQUIPMENT dealer magazine

RESOURCES FOR SUCCESSFUL DEALERS


## EDM DEALER PROFILE

**E. Bourassa & Sons Celebrates a Century of Success** PAGE 4

## FEATURES

NAEDA NORTH AMERICAN EQUIPMENT DEALERS ASSOCIATION

equipmentdealermagazine.com

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**ON OUR COVER** The Bourassa 4th generation partners, from left to right: Dan Jr., Doug, Kurtis and sister, Diane Herriot.

NORTH AMERICAN EQUIPMENT DEALERS ASSOCIATION

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*Equipment Dealer Magazine* is printed by Mountain View Printing & Graphics Ltd.
3656 - 60 Avenue SE
Calgary, Alberta T2C 2C7
Toll Free 1.800.262.4863

PUBLICATION INFORMATION
*Equipment Dealer Magazine* is published and distributed four times a year. Please contact NAEDA for advertising rates and service charges. NAEDA reserves the right to refuse any material, either for distribution, or for printing in *Equipment Dealer Magazine*. Acceptance of any advertising does not imply endorsement by the Association. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form without prior written consent from the publisher. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the officers or members of NAEDA.

Canadian Publications
Mail Agreement #41386549
Return Undeliverable Addresses to:
NAEDA, 2435 Pegasus Road NE
Calgary, Alberta T2E 8C3

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## EDMdealer profile



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# MARKET SHARE: Fact or Fiction

by KIM ROMINGER


As dealers are being rated, graded, pressured, and, in some instances, terminated due to lack of market share, it's crucial that the manner in which this measurement is determined is widely known and agreed upon. **This is where industry-wide standards and transparency play a pivotal role.**

**Concerns about market share measurement are pertinent, especially in an industry as complex and data driven as equipment sales.**

While researching this article, I read many definitions of market share. The definition below is representative of those I read:

> *"**Market share**, in strategic management and marketing, is the percentage or proportion of the total available market or market segment that is being serviced by a company. It can be expressed as a company's sales revenue (from that market) divided by the **total** sales revenue available in that market. It can also be expressed as a company's unit sales volume (in a market) divided by the **total** volume of units sold in that market."*

It is evident that the common thread in these definitions is the word total. The definition of market share as a percentage of the total market can be vague, especially when the "total" is not clearly defined or when all players do not report their sales figures. As dealers are being rated, graded, pressured, and, in some instances, terminated due to lack of market share, it's crucial that the manner in which this measurement is determined is widely known and agreed upon. This is where industry-wide standards and transparency play a pivotal role. Having a common platform or agreed-upon methodology for reporting sales and calculating market share can provide a sense of reassurance and confidence in the market share system.

For the sake of argument, would you agree that if some are affecting the market that do not "report" their numbers for market share calculations, these folks should be widely known? And, if it is the case that several are not participating or if a few are selling many measurable units in particular areas, wouldn't this fact, in the least, distort and, in the most, make market share numbers meaningless? If certain players are not reporting their sales figures, their impact on market share is unaccounted for, potentially distorting the results.

As I see it, it would be beneficial to identify and disclose which entities are not participating in the reporting system. **This transparency could help in understanding the limitations and potential inaccuracies in market share calculations.**

— Kim Rominger | CEO, NAEDA

## Consider the Implications

How can someone's lifelong work and investment be taken away due to what could be an inaccurate measurement? As I see it, it would be beneficial to identify and disclose which entities are not participating in the reporting system. This transparency could help in understanding the limitations and potential inaccuracies in market share calculations.

## Standardized Reporting

All dealers and manufacturers should follow a consistent format for reporting sales data, including unit sales and revenue.

## Comprehensive Data Collection

The industry should work towards collecting data from all players, including those who might not traditionally report their figures. This comprehensive data collection is not just a necessity but a means to ensure that all players are accounted for, making you feel secure and well-informed about the market dynamics.

This transparency is not just a request, it's your right to have accurate information to justify the numbers presented. It would also allow for better auditing of numbers if there were a dispute without causing major work for the party questioning the numbers. In the days of precision technology, we have the means to precisely track new equipment (at least on larger units, with more units coming on-line every day), which is essential for accurate market share calculations. We need to continue leveraging technology to enhance data accuracy and availability, fostering an optimistic and forward-thinking approach to measuring market share in the industry.

**This is a significant industry issue that demands our collective attention and resolution. We will persist in raising this question and seeking answers from all parties involved.**

***Why?* Because membership doesn't cost – IT PAYS!** EDM

# BUYING EQUIPMENT?

## Take advantage of special FCC rates

Plus, no application fee or age restrictions on equipment.
Available on loan terms up to seven years.

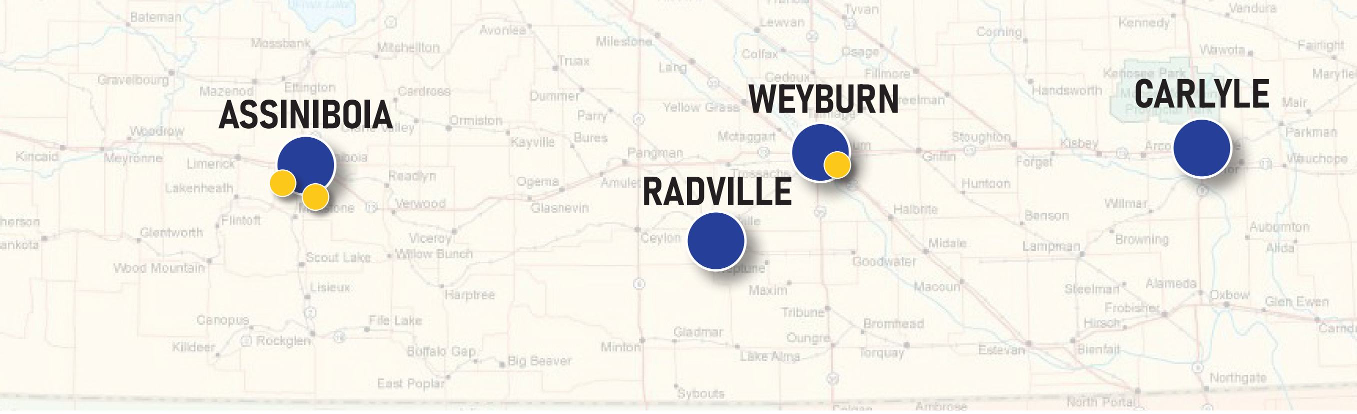
**Ask your FCC representative or local dealer for details.**

The Bourassa 4th generation partners, from left to right: Dan Jr., Doug, Kurtis and sister, Diane Herriot.

# E. BOURASSA & SONS

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

**The last 100 years have seen many changes that have helped shape the business we see today. While many aspects of the business may have changed, the one thing that remains the same is that the business has always and still is owned by the Bourassa family.**




**JOANNE OLSON** is managing editor of publications for the North American Equipment Dealers Association, and manages the Canadian office in Calgary, Alberta.

# E. BOURASSA & SONS CELEBRATES A CENTURY OF SUCCESS: Honouring a Legacy of Community and Commitment

by JOANNE OLSON


EMILE BOURASSA

ALBERT BOURASSA

ROMEO BOURASSA

**Not too many companies reach a remarkable 100 year milestone.**

Through a legacy of family commitment, growth and dedication to the staff, customers and communities they serve, E. Bourassa & Sons continues to honour the cornerstones set by their great-grandfather, Emile Bourassa. As they recognize 100 years, lets take a look back at their history, legacy, and the guiding principles that have brought them to the historic anniversary they celebrate this year.

## 1924: The Beginning

In 1924, Emile Bourassa, a retired grain farmer, embarked on a new entrepreneurship journey by acquiring John Carlson's coal and wood business in Radville, SK. Quickly expanding to offer flour, feed, hardware, wagon and sleigh parts, and more, Emile adapted to community needs, famously introducing the region's first mobile laundry service in 1927, utilizing a Maytag washer mounted to the front bumper on his Buick sedan. By 1928, the focus shifted towards agricultural equipment from renowned manufacturers like Massey Harris, Oliver Cockshutt and John Deere (1932-1967).

## 1948: Family Partnership

In 1948, the business became E. Bourassa & Sons, and Emile partnered with his sons, Albert and Romeo. This marked a pivotal chapter, with the company diversifying to keep employees engaged, especially during tough times post-war. Following the war, they converted farm tractors from steel wheels to rubber tires, installed box hoist systems on farm trucks, and hauled grain for farmers. By the 1950s, E. Bourassa & Sons was well established and respected in the community, known for its customer service and quality products.

## 1950: A New Era

After Emile's retirement in 1950, Albert and his wife, Madeleine, took the reins, officially incorporating as E. Bourassa & Sons Ltd. in 1962. Madeleine worked as the bookkeeper, and Albert continued to expand their offerings. Under their leadership, they introduced new equipment lines, including Morris Rod-Weeder, Chrysler, Plymouth, Fargo, and Versatile tractors, over the next several years. In 1967, they parted with John Deere, adding Allis Chalmers and Gleaner to their product lines.

The next generation joined Albert and Madeleine in the business, with their sons Dan starting in 1964 and Richard in 1968, contributing significantly to its growth. Dan worked in the sales end of the company, eventually becoming the sales manager. Richard obtained his mechanic's diploma in 1971, working as the sole mechanic in the shop at the time. He was well known, far and wide, for his ability to diagnose and repair almost anything put in front of him. The family continued to grow the business and, in 1979, relocated the business just south of Radville.

## 1975: Expansion and Innovation

Relocating in 1979 to a new facility, Albert designed and engineered the Bourassa 3-Point Hitch for use on most brands of farm tractors by using specific mounting kits. This 3-Point Hitch was manufactured in

CONT. ON PG 6

CONT. FROM PG 5

a separate building adjoined to the new facility and became widely popular across Canada and the U.S. Manufacturing continued to expand, with products including land levelers, 3-point rock diggers, 3-point cultivators, and 3-point bale spears.

Dan's wife Cecile joined the business in the 1980s, eventually taking over the accounting/bookkeeping from Madeleine. By the late 1980s, Dan and Richard became partners with Albert, allowing Albert and Madeleine to enjoy retirement.

Versatile and Morris made up a large portion of the business as their company continued to grow. In the mid-1980s, Versatile became Ford Versatile, eventually becoming Ford New Holland in the late 1980s. This was the beginning of E. Bourassa & Sons officially becoming a New Holland dealer.

## 1990: Fourth Generation Joins

In 1995, Dan's son, Daniel (Dan Jr.), entered the business, after completing a 2-year business diploma. Dan Jr. began his career working under the mentorship of his father, becoming the sales manager by 1998. Customer demand and industry opportunity, coupled with persistence and determination by Dan Jr. to expand the business led to the acquisition of Jones Implements Ltd in Pangman in 1996. This

ASSINIBOIA


CARLYLE


RADVILLE

WEYBURN


**We stand behind what we sell and as such, we only offer the most reliable product lines. We don't just sell a product, we sell an experience, create a relationship and bring you into our family.**

Kurtis Bourassa welcomes everyone to the celebration in Assiniboia.

WEYBURN CELEBRATION

strategic move signified a period of growth and opportunity.

In 1997, after graduating with a parts management diploma, Dan's son Doug joined the family business. He started in the parts department and helped in sales and on the road in the newly established Pangman location.

The family business continued to expand, and in the summer of 1999, opened their 3rd New Holland dealership in Assiniboia. This expansion marked a significant milestone in the company's commitment to providing quality sales and service to its customers and grounded its position as a key player in the industry.

## 2000: Continued Family Legacy

In 2002, Dan and Cecile purchased the remaining shares, focusing on involving their children in the business. Dan and Cecile's son Kurtis pursued a career in Civil Engineering, eventually joining the business in 2003 as general manager. Their daughter Diane followed in 2007 as the controller after obtaining a degree in business. New facilities in Assiniboia and additional product lines, including Arctic Cat ATVs and snowmobiles, showcased their commitment to growth. They saw an opportunity to further diversify, which included a building expansion in Assiniboia, offering a new showroom space dedicated to Napa Auto Parts.

In 2009, the 4th generation partners purchased the business from their parents and continued expanding to five locations, which later consolidated to four locations in Weyburn, Assiniboia, Carlyle and Radville. New facilities were built in Weyburn and Carlyle and additional shop space was added in Assiniboia to accommodate the rapid growth. With more space and additional locations, E. Bourassa & Sons now provides customers with central locations to service their needs.

## 2024: A Century Strong

Celebrating 100 years, E. Bourassa & Sons employs over 130 people across four locations, with several 5th generation Bourassa's working in the business, upholding core values of family, honesty, fairness, and community. With over 40 equipment lines and a strong commitment to giving back—donating over a million dollars to local communities in the past five years—the company remains a vital part of Saskatchewan's agricultural landscape.

## Celebrating 100 Years

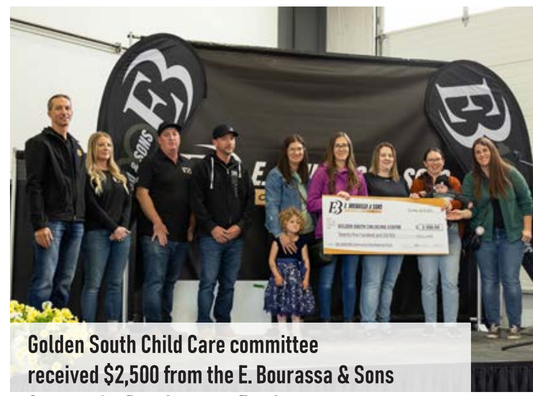
This milestone was commemorated with a series of customer appreciation events in June 2024, hosted at each of their locations across Saskatchewan. Over 2,000 customers joined the festivities, which included a BBQ brisket lunch, beer gardens, a kids' zone, and exciting door prizes. A major highlight was the giveaway of a New Holland Compact Tractor with a loader. The events were graced by guest speakers John Gormley and Paul Martin, adding to the celebrations' significance.

The community spirit was at the heart of these events. More than $10,000 was raised through the beer gardens for local clubs. With E. Bourassa & Sons covering the beverage costs, this facilitated 100% of the proceeds going to these organizations. The company's commitment to giving back was further demonstrated by its Community Development Fund, which awarded $110,000 to fifteen deserving communities—surpassing their initial goal of $100,000.

Core values of family, honesty, fairness, and community have guided E. Bourassa & Sons over the past century, and continues today with Emile's great-grandchildren, Kurtis, Dan Jr., Doug and Diane.

E. Bourassa & Sons 100-year journey is a testament to the strength of their people, loyal customers, and progressive communities. The company's success is a celebration of the past and a commitment to the future. The recent donations through the Community Development Fund highlight their ongoing dedication to making a meaningful impact in the communities they serve.

As E. Bourassa & Sons move forward into its second century, their guiding philosophy, "Where the People Make the Difference," continues to drive their success. The company remains steadfast in its mission to provide exceptional service and foster strong community relationships, ensuring that its legacy of dedication and growth continues for generations to come. EDM



Golden South Child Care committee received $2,500 from the E. Bourassa & Sons Community Development Fund.

RADVILLE CELEBRATION

Weyburn Agricultural Society received $10,000 from the E. Bourassa & Sons Community Development Fund.

# NORTH AMERICAN DEALER CONFERENCE

## NOVEMBER 17-19, 2025


## NAVIGATING THE FUTURE OF USED EQUIPMENT

### Trends, Forecasts, and Strategies for Sustainable Inventory Management

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**A glimpse into just a portion of our 2025 session topics...**

### Manufacturer Panel on the State of New and Used Equipment

A panel of manufacturers will discuss the current landscape of both new and used equipment sales, sharing insights into the challenges they face in moving equipment during market fluctuations and the strategies they are employing to help dealers manage their inventories.

### Used Equipment Trends and Forecast

A deep dive into the current trends in used equipment sales and a forecast for the upcoming months or years.

### Managing Through Downturns

A presentation on how to manage dealership operations during economic downturns or periods of low equipment demand. The speaker will offer strategies for maintaining financial stability, cutting costs without sacrificing service, and identifying alternative revenue streams.

### When Equipment Sales are Down, Where to Focus Your Efforts to Drive Revenue

In times of reduced equipment sales, it is crucial to focus on other areas of business to maintain revenue. In this session we will be Highlighting the aftermarket sector, including parts, service, and accessories, as a reliable revenue stream, along with strategies for growing service departments and increasing parts sales to compensate for lower equipment turnover.

### How to Use UCC Data to Move Equipment

This session will explore how dealerships can leverage UCC (Uniform Commercial Code) data to identify and approach potential customers for moving equipment.

### Developing an Optimal Auction Strategy for Maximum Success

This session will provide guidance on creating auction strategies that maximize returns while minimizing aged inventory.

**Additional Topics...**

### Government Affairs

An update on key legislative and regulatory developments affecting the equipment industry.

### Women in Industry Panel

A panel discussion featuring women leaders in the equipment industry, highlighting the importance of diversity and inclusion.

### Human Resources/Workforce Development Panel

A panel discussion on HR best practices and workforce development, featuring insights from Dealer Institute trainers.

### Labor Analysis: Wholegoods and Customer Labor Hours

This session will focus on understanding the relationship between wholegoods sales and labor hours generated through warranty and internal repairs.

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# RIGHT TO REPAIR DEALER DEMOS:
## Bridging the Gap of Understanding

by ERIC WAREHAM

**With Right to Repair becoming a political football, it is subject to the same dynamic all our politics have succumbed to in this era.**

Misinformation isn't even an accurate enough phrase to describe what we encounter. There's a whole typology that includes mal-information, disinformation, and out-and-out lies to sift through. How do we contend with all this on an issue as complex and hyper-technical as Right to Repair? As it turns out, the answer is to treat everyone like they are from Missouri - the Show Me State.

Dealer demonstrations have become the most effective method of combatting all types of misunderstanding and confusion about the reality of the repair landscape and showing that our industry is a leading example of one supporting customer self-repair.

> **Once the baseline of reality is established, the policy discussion becomes much more reasonable as people understand what we are really discussing.**

### Bringing Stakeholders to the Dealership

One of the primary problems we face with the issue of Right to Repair, much like other issues today, is having the real stakeholders involved in resolving the issue. There are certainly outside groups with no connection to production agriculture that have pushed this issue forward. We can't control who will testify at a public hearing or try to raise money off the issue, but we can control who is brought to the dealership to discuss the issue in good faith, intending to be transparent and resolve it. In our minds, that certainly begins with the producers themselves and includes elected officials.

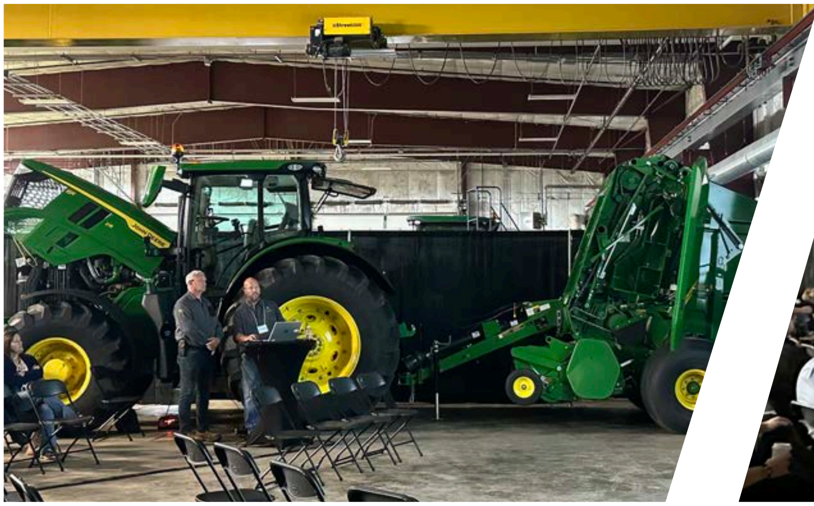
From our earliest dealer demonstrations, we have always sought to bring the Farm Bureau, Federations of Agriculture and other commodity and policy groups into the dealership. These are the people who have real skin in the game and are knowledgeable about what works and what doesn't. Their input has been invaluable in moving forward with more product offerings that support self-repair from all the manufacturers. And the Farm Bureaus, Canadian Federations and commodity groups have been more than willing to meet with dealers and manufacturers to work towards that goal. To further that point, equipment demonstrations were the initial collaboration that culminated in the Memorandums of Understanding between the American Farm Bureau Federation and farm equipment manufacturers.

For legislators, equipment demonstrations are eye-opening experiences. They first notice that we are fully transparent in discussing what is available to support customer self-repair. The second thing they notice is how much is currently available directly to customers and the lengths dealers go to in supporting their customers. By that, I mean legislators are not commonly familiar with the amount of parts inventory dealers have, what fill rates dealers strive for, and how dealers work around the clock to keep their customers up and running. It becomes very difficult to believe that dealers are anything other than fully committed to supporting their customers' uptime once legislators have the experience of seeing firsthand how much dealerships invest in and do to achieve that goal.

### The Growth of Dealer Demonstrations

To my knowledge, the first dealer demonstration relating to Right to Repair was held


RIGHT TO REPAIR DEALER DEMO | ENNS BROTHERS LTD. | PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE, MB JUNE 2022



**RIGHT TO REPAIR DEALER DEMO**
**GREEN DIAMOND EQUIPMENT | SUMMERSIDE, PE** SEPT. 2024

in McPherson, Kansas, in 2019. The event was held at Prairieland Partners and involved the Kansas Farm Bureau, several manufacturers, and NAEDA staff. It was a test run in many ways, and we weren't sure whether the format would work. In large part, that first demonstration has become a template for nearly a hundred demonstrations to this point.

For those who have yet to take part in one, a dealer demonstration follows a classroom format and ends with a hands-on demonstration. In the classroom format, dealership personnel will kick things off with a welcome to all attendees. Association staff follow with a brief, broad overview of the Right to Repair issue and where it stands today legislatively. Then, we dive into the actual meat of the presentation with a manufacturer representative walking through what is available from a parts, tools, documentation, and diagnostic perspective to support customer repair. Even for people very familiar with the issue, this generally leads to some ah-ha moments about the range of products and services that are out there.

We take people from the classroom to the shop floor to demonstrate our discussion. Without fail, the technicians steal the show with their acumen and ability to explain everything in technical and layman's terms. This is always the best part. Whether it's a very knowledgeable producer or a legislator touching farm equipment for the first time, everyone seems to learn something new. And in the digital era, plenty of pictures have been taken to prove that it happened.

**ERIC WAREHAM** is senior vice president of government affairs for NAEDA. He has extensive legal and policy experience in both a trade association and the private sector.

## The Practical Effect of Hands-On Demonstrations

The most salient point of the demonstrations is that they dispel misleading information. A committee room or legislative chamber floor is not the place to try and prove something. At the dealership, nobody can claim that a manual is unavailable because you can point to them right on the shelf or bring it up on the website with the complete schematics that immediately show what is available. The same goes for parts, tools, and diagnostics. In other words, the truth becomes self-evident; in today's world, that is seemingly the only thing people can't refute.

Once the baseline of reality is established, the policy discussion becomes much more reasonable as people understand what we are really discussing. Narrowing the focus puts the ball in our court to explain that we support the Right to Repair but oppose the legislation because the issue is not about access and availability; it's about opposing legislation that dictates price fixing and allows modification affecting safety and emissions. When the discussion is rationalized to the heart of the matter, real stakeholders and elected officials understand that the legislation is misleading, not our industry practices.

*"The Right to Repair demonstration was an eye-opener for all stakeholders. It provided a deeper understanding of the invaluable technology and support that dealers offer to customers, highlighting the essential role they play in ensuring seamless and efficient service."*

– John Reddin, CEO
Green Diamond Equipment

## Continuing to Educate

Dealer demonstrations have been a critical component to our advocacy on the Right to Repair issue. We have held demonstrations in dozens of states and several provinces. We have several more planned throughout the fall, mainly in the northeast and eastern Canada. In many states where demonstrations have been held, they lead to exemptions for our industry in Right to Repair legislation. That is the goal, and we will continue to facilitate dealer demonstrations wherever possible to avoid misleading information that propels legislation forward that would be catastrophic to our industry.

With that said, to anyone reading this, if the association approaches your dealership to host a demonstration, we sincerely hope that you take the opportunity up. To everyone who has hosted a demonstration in the past, thank you for taking your valuable time to support the industry. EDM

**ERIC WAREHAM** is senior vice president of government affairs for NAEDA. He has extensive legal and policy experience in both a trade association and the private sector. Prior to joining the association, he was general counsel for an Oregon-based heavy civil construction company. He also served as the director of government relations and general counsel for an association in the wood products industry, has managed state and national political campaigns and held numerous positions in a state legislature. Wareham is a graduate of the Willamette University College of Law and Augusta University.

# Should Canada End Strikes and Lockouts in the Transportation Sector with Essential Services Designation?

by BRAD WALL


Our customers depend on it and our producers will suffer the consequences if those buying countries opt for more reliable suppliers.

**It was late in 1987, and I was just a few months on the job as a Member's Assistant in Ottawa for the Member of Parliament for our area - Geoff Wilson.**

The Progressive Conservative MP for the constituency Swift Current-Maple Creek-Assiniboia had been consistent in voicing concerns on behalf of his western agricultural district about curtailments in the shipping of wheat and so many other commodities caused by strikes by the grain handlers unions.

On December 11, 1987, Geoff rose in the House of Commons to highlight that 69 grain handlers at the Port of Prince Rupert were then on strike, threatening the reliable movement of 15% of Canada's export grain. He noted that similar work stoppages at Thunder Bay and the Port of Vancouver had resulted in similar concerns the year before.

> Canada is such an expansive country in which we grow and produce things that are, more often than not - at a great distance from the port. **Our economy is existentially dependent on exports. Being a reliable shipper of not just ag products but so many other commodities is paramount.**

He asked his colleagues in the Commons if it was not time to consider federal legislation that would prevent such work stoppages with an essential services designation, and the attendant prescribed alternatives to resolving labour contract negotiations. His was not a rhetorical question. But no such legislation was introduced.

As is the case in the United States, the Canadian transportation sector comes under federal and not provincial jurisdiction, so any such legislation would have to come from Ottawa.

Wilson was back on this same issue again 18 months later. It was June 1, 1989, when he again rose in the House of Commons on behalf of his constituents and, more broadly - Canada's farmers. He introduced private members Bill C-250, An Act to Amend the Canadian Labour Code (grain handling), which would achieve the end of work stoppages in grain handling.

He raised the issue yet again later that year when a grain handlers strike at the St. Lawrence Seaway curtailed "some 1 million tonnes of grain bound for export… being held thereby tarnishing Canada's reputation abroad and hurting our producers at home."

Make no mistake about it – the reliability of our export supply is a huge issue for North American agriculture. Our customers depend on it and our producers will suffer the consequences if those buying countries opt for more reliable suppliers.

This is exactly what happened in Canada in 2014. Though not caused by any strikes or lockouts at the ports, a backlog in the rail sector was causing the same kinds of problems for timely agriculture shipments from Canada that prolonged worker stoppages can cause. The backlog mimicked, for the purposes of this discussion, the effects of a strike on our grain movement and export.

And lest there be any doubt that export and shipment reliability is not crucial to our sector, consider that the so-called Great Canadian Grain Logistics Crisis caused Canada's long-time grain customer Japan to switch grain imports to other countries.

Canada is such an expansive country in which we grow and produce things that are, more often than not - at a great distance from the port. Our economy is existentially dependent on exports. Being a reliable shipper of not just ag products but so many other commodities is paramount.

As I write this, the federal government has announced it will use back-to-work legislation to force binding arbitration to end another looming rail strike/lockout in Canada. This seems to me that the uncertainty of whether any federal government might ad hoc such an end to a potential work stoppage helps make the case for permanent essential services designation for this sector.

Geoff Wilson MP said it 35 years ago.

Surely, it is time to consider alternatives to strikes and lockouts in the transportation sector. EDM

**BRAD WALL** was the 14th Premier of Saskatchewan. He is the Principal of Flying W Consulting, a partner in the CW Cattle Co. Ltd, and serves on various private, public, and non-profit boards. In addition, Mr. Wall is also a valued advisor to the North American Equipment Dealers Association.

**BRAD WALL** was the 14th Premier of Saskatchewan, and is an advisor to the North American Equipment Dealers Association.

# ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE:
## Avoiding Pitfalls and Driving Success in Your Dealership

by MICHAEL PIERCY

**While the pitfalls can seem daunting, there are clear strategies that dealerships can adopt to ensure success when driving organizational change.**

**In today's fast-paced business environment, it's easy to fall into the trap of trying to take on more than we can handle.**

This tendency is often heightened when we attend industry conferences or training sessions. We return to our dealerships energized, motivated, and full of new ideas for improvement. Armed with an extensive list of 48 different initiatives, we set out to transform our dealer organizations. However, more often than not, we fail—sometimes miserably. Why? Because while the ideas are good, attempting to implement them all at once is simply overwhelming.

Change, especially in an organization, needs to be approached strategically. The truth is, even though implementing all 48 initiatives may be necessary to create the organization we envision, trying to do it all at once will likely result in failure. It's not about dismissing the need for change, but about crafting a plan that ensures sustainable success. This article will explore the pitfalls we've encountered over the years and offer strategies to guide you in effectively managing change within your dealership.

### Common Pitfalls in Organizational Change

#### Not Understanding the Need to Change

One of the primary reasons organizational change efforts fail is a lack of understanding of why the change is necessary in the first place. Without a clear sense of purpose, employees may see the change as an arbitrary or unnecessary disruption, leading to resistance and confusion. Dealership leaders must clearly communicate the "why" behind the change, connecting it to outcomes such as increased competitiveness, better customer service, or operational efficiency. This shared vision fosters unity, reduces pushback, and turns skepticism into collaboration.

#### Not Recognizing the Benefits of Changing

People naturally tend to stick to what's comfortable, making it hard to embrace new methods or processes. When leadership fails to highlight the benefits of change, employees may focus only on the inconveniences or challenges. In a dealership, this could mean not understanding how new strategies or technologies can lead to growth, improved profitability, or enhanced employee satisfaction. Leaders should actively demonstrate the positive impacts of change on individual roles, team dynamics, and overall dealership success.

#### Too Much, Too Fast

One of the biggest mistakes dealerships make is trying to drive change too quickly. Organizations evolve as their people evolve, and because people are naturally resistant to change, expecting immediate transformation is unrealistic. Change takes time, particularly when it involves altering long-standing behaviors, processes, and mindsets. Rushing the process often results in burnout, confusion, and ultimately, failure.

#### The Wrong People Leading the Charge

While manpower is important, having the right people in leadership roles is critical. Change efforts often fail when individuals tasked with spearheading initiatives lack the vision, skills, or commitment needed to drive transformation. It's essential to have passionate leaders who not only understand the changes but are also dedicated to seeing them through. They need to inspire others and keep the team motivated throughout the process.

#### Lack of a Strategic Plan

Throwing ideas into the air and hoping they stick is a recipe for disaster. Organizational change is only successful when it's backed by a well-thought-out plan. Too often, dealerships jump into initiatives without a clear roadmap, leading to confusion, misalignment, and ultimately, failure. A strategic plan outlines the steps for implementation, defines key milestones, and establishes metrics to track progress. This level of detail ensures that everyone is working toward the same goal and understands their role in the process.

### How to Succeed in Driving Organizational Change

While the pitfalls can seem daunting, there are clear strategies that dealerships can adopt to ensure success when driving organizational change.

#### Assimilate Ideas Thoughtfully

Conferences, industry trainings, and internal brainstorming sessions are invaluable for generating ideas on how to improve your dealership. Having a steady stream of new ideas is critical for growth, but the key is to assimilate these ideas thoughtfully. Don't rush into action the moment you return from an event. Instead, take time to digest the information and determine which ideas are truly worth pursuing.

#### Prioritize Needs

While all 48 ideas you've come up with might be beneficial, not all of them need to be implemented immediately. Prioritization is crucial. Start by identifying which initiatives are most urgent and which will have the great-

Change, especially in an organization, needs to be approached strategically... **It's not about dismissing the need for change, but about crafting a plan that ensures sustainable success.**

## IMPLEMENTING CHANGE: A Step-by-Step Guide

1. **Identify and Define the Problem**

   Before diving into solutions, take a step back and define the problems or areas of improvement. Understanding the root cause ensures that any changes implemented are targeted and effective.

2. **Gather and Analyze Data**

   Use data to guide decision-making. Review historical performance, customer feedback, and industry benchmarks to identify gaps and set realistic goals for improvement.

3. **Engage Your Team**

   Involve your team from the outset to increase buy-in and gather valuable insights. Remember, your employees are on the front lines, their feedback is critical to successful change, and people changing brings the organization with them.

4. **Create a Detailed Action Plan**

   Once you understand what needs to be changed, develop a detailed action plan. Assign responsibility, set deadlines, and ensure your plan is realistic, given the resources and manpower available.

5. **Communicate Clearly and Consistently**

   Communication is key to successful change management. Ensure everyone in your dealership understands the changes, why they're important, and how they will be impacted. Consistent communication throughout the process helps alleviate concerns and keeps everyone aligned.

6. **Monitor Progress and Adjust as Needed**

   Regularly monitor progress and use KPIs to measure success. Be flexible and willing to adjust your plan as challenges arise. Staying adaptive will help you stay on track.

est impact on your business. Once you've established your priorities, create a timeline for implementation. Recognize that while everything can't be accomplished in a single day, a methodical approach will yield significant results over time.

### Develop a Strategic Plan

Nothing worth doing is accomplished without a plan. Many dealerships attempt to drive significant change without a clear strategy, leading to poor results. A well-crafted strategic plan outlines the changes to be made and breaks down the process into manageable steps. It should include timelines, key performance indicators (KPIs), and accountability measures to ensure progress is tracked and adjustments can be made as needed.

### Accountability

Accountability is essential for driving successful change. Without it, even the best-laid plans can fall apart. Assign responsibility for specific tasks and hold regular check-ins to monitor progress. Establish clear KPIs and celebrate wins along the way to keep the team motivated. Accountability fosters ownership and ensures that everyone is working toward the same goal.

**Change is essential for any dealership looking to grow and stay competitive in today's market.** However, attempting to implement too much, too quickly, can lead to failure. By avoiding common pitfalls such as rushing the process, having the wrong people in leadership roles, and neglecting to create a strategic plan, dealerships can significantly increase their chances of success.

By thoughtfully assimilating ideas, prioritizing needs, and developing a detailed, methodical plan, your dealership can achieve meaningful, lasting change that drives growth and improves performance. Remember, change is a journey, not a destination. **With the right strategy, your dealership can navigate this journey successfully and emerge stronger on the other side.** EDM


**MICHAEL PIERCY** is the vice president of dealer development for NAEDA.

DEALER INSTITUTE

**MICHAEL PIERCY** is the vice president of dealer development for NAEDA. He has over 20 years' experience in organizational leadership training and development and succession planning. Piercy joined the association in 2015 to help build the Dealer Institute as a complete solution for industry training and consulting needs. Along with DI Trainers, Piercy was instrumental in developing the library of training and consulting opportunities DI offers dealer organizations today. His current role, leading NAEDA's Dealer Institute, allows him and his team to guide dealer organizations through training and consultative initiatives, as well as merger, acquisition, and succession planning.

# Here we go again?!

by ARTHUR WARD


**It doesn't seem that long ago that we were on the edge of a used equipment cliff.**

Or maybe it was the last one? Or the one before that? Or the one - see where I am going with this?

The greatest challenge is finding and retaining good people; our most significant risk is used equipment inventory. It can also be our most important opportunity but isn't our greatest strength. It is usually our greatest weakness.

Let's go back to my opening comment regarding the used equipment cliff we faced in the late 2010s. Manufacturers were pushing for market share, which wasn't anything new. What was new this time was the large capacity increases most manufacturers had added between 2008 and 2014.

This added availability was a major catalyst that helped start the mainline range war that was the 2010s. The size of machines and the volume of production both saw giant leaps. We saw the 2-for-1 trade becoming a thing. Multiple smaller machines being traded on fewer large machines was more and more common. And selling the same amount of new generated more used than it had in the past.

The perfect storm was about to make landfall when an unlikely hero came to save the day: the COVID-19 pandemic. Supply chains were interrupted, and new equipment was extremely limited, if available at all. Delivery dates became moving targets, component shortages had yards full, and factories were filled with machines that were not complete. But do you know what was available? 5- or 6-years' worth of overstocked used equipment.

Customers started warming up to buying one- and two-year-old used machines that had been piling up. Dealers got creative in how to sell them, and without the pressure from manufacturers to order and sell new equipment, they could get their used equipment houses in order. Inventory levels began getting back in line. We were washing out deals that, in some cases, started years before. Used equipment to sales ratios was improving, as were wholegoods margins and profitability. Now, fast forward to 2024.

**We need to remind ourselves who runs our businesses. Is it you and your team, or is it your supplier?** One group wants you to be successful, and the other wants you to order and sell more new equipment whether you make any money from it or not.

The factories are firing on all cylinders again. The pandemic blip is in our rearview mirror, and new equipment is flying off the shelves. The lots we cleaned up only four short years ago are beginning to fill up again. What is the difference this time? Used machines today are more expensive than the new ones were pre-pandemic. The gap between a new buyer and a traditional used buyer is getting wider and late model used is challenged to bridge the gap. We will soon to be on the edge of another used equipment cliff, and I hope we don't get rescued by a worldwide lockdown this time.

Why do we keep doing it? It reminds me of the morning after a night out that you may have overindulged. You look skyward and state, "I will never do that again as long as I live!" Once enough time has passed, you forget the pain, and you end up doing it again. Used equipment is the same thing. We forget the pain and do it again. It doesn't have to be that way.

We need to remind ourselves who runs our businesses. Is it you and your team, or is it your supplier? One group wants you to be successful, and the other wants you to order and sell more new equipment whether you make any money from it or not. I think you all know which is which.

Just because you can sell more new products doesn't necessarily mean you should. By no means am I saying new equipment sales are bad. New equipment sales are the lifeblood of growing our businesses. We just need to know when to adjust our sales to put ourselves in the best position for success. Keeping an eye on two or three KPIs can help you see the train coming before it runs you over. Each one alone isn't necessarily a definitive marker, but when monitored in conjunction with each other, you will see it coming.

One of the most important components is knowing your trade area.

- *How much used equipment can my trade area absorb?*
- *What is the buying cycle of the customers in my trade area?*
- *Do I have a home for each trade I am buying?*

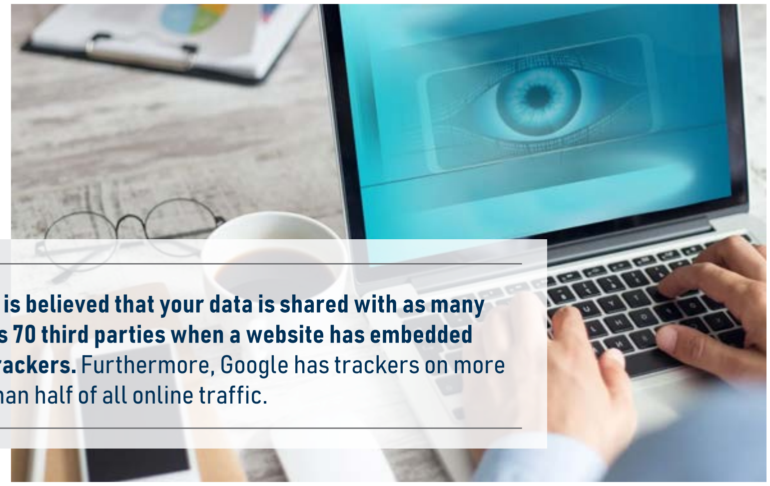
Selling new equipment is a tool to generate the used equipment your customers want or need. Knowing how many used machines you can sell each year should be a driver in how many new machines you should order or sell. If you sell 25 used combines a year, it doesn't make much sense to sell 50 new combines, buying 50 trades. Only take on trade what you can washout of within 12 months. If you buy twice as much used equipment as you can sell every year, it doesn't take long to be in big trouble.

It is critical for your sales team to know their territories or customer lists inside out and backward. They need to know their customers' needs, where they are in the buying cycle, and what variables will drive their decisions. Understanding that makes sure you have the right solutions at the right time. You can target customers with trades you can sell and then go get them. EDM

**ARTHUR WARD** is a trainer with NAEDA's Dealer Institute. Prior to joining DI as a wholegoods and sales specialist and trainer, Arthur held leadership roles within Pattison Agriculture and its legacy dealerships in Canada, and he is currently the Chief Integration Officer for Aberhart Group. He looks forward to helping dealers succeed by improving whole goods and sales operations.

**ARTHUR WARD,** Wholegoods and Sales Specialist and Trainer with NAEDA's Dealer Institute.

# What Are Browser Trackers?



**It is believed that your data is shared with as many as 70 third parties when a website has embedded trackers.** Furthermore, Google has trackers on more than half of all online traffic.

**Browser trackers are like little digital spies hiding in websites.**

They quietly gather information about what you do online. As you visit different websites, these trackers record your actions and interests. Think of them as curious onlookers trying to understand your online behavior. Some websites sell your private data. This is why you get spam, unwanted mail and, even more important, how your personal information could end up on the dark web.

### How Do They Work?

When you're tracked online, a tracker, such as a cookie, is inserted into the code of the website you're visiting. When you visit different websites, these trackers record your actions and interests. They create a digital fingerprint of your online identity, which includes details about your computer and browser settings. Advertisers then use this fingerprint to show you ads they think you'll find interesting.

It is believed that your data is shared with as many as 70 third parties when a website has embedded trackers. Furthermore, Google has trackers on more than half of all online traffic.

### The two main reasons why you're tracked online are…

**ANALYTICS**
Admins like to know how you interact with their website. This may help them position buttons better on certain pages, see what websites users came from previously, etc.

**ADVERTISING**
Tracking is a valuable opportunity for most website owners. Especially if they're able to target you with online ads for similar products or remind you to buy something they've seen you look at elsewhere.

### What information do trackers collect about me?

If you thought trackers only tracked what you were browsing online, think again. Whatever you were browsing is also linked to your IP address, which is linked to your network and can be used to find your approximate location.

Here are some of the things websites and trackers know about you:

**YOUR BROWSING HABITS**
Trackers keep records of what websites you visit, what ads you click on and what you purchase.

**YOUR IP ADDRESS**
An IP address is a number assigned to your device. It can recognize you when you return to sites you've already visited and give access to your location.

**YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION**
Any information that you give a website like your name, age, gender, and address can be stored and used to create a profile on you.

### How to Block Trackers and Ads

Regain some sense of privacy and stop trackers from getting their hands on your confidential information.

**USE AD AND TRACKER BLOCKERS**
Ads help to collect information about you. You can download an Ad and/or tracker blocker as a browser plug-in.

**MANAGE COOKIES**
Regularly review and clear cookies and configure your browser to restrict third-party cookies.

**USE A PRIVATE SEARCH ENGINE**
Google tracks nearly half of all internet traffic in the world. Luckily, others have created alternative search engines like DuckDuckGo and MetaGer that don't track users and let you browse anonymously.

**BROWSE IN INCOGNITO/PRIVATE WINDOW**
Use private browsing modes to prevent your history, cookies, and data from being stored.

**MIND WHAT YOU SHARE**
Be cautious about sharing sensitive information online, especially on sites you're unfamiliar with or have unclear privacy policies.

**USE A VPN**
Enhance privacy with a VPN, encrypting your connection and masking your IP address.

### Tracking isn't a necessity

By growing indifferent to online tracking, we're in danger of creating a culture where it's OK for our information, including every move and habit to be monitored and used. This means that huge amounts of our data are left dormant in databases all over the world, presenting very lucrative opportunities for hackers and cybercriminals.

### You deserve to feel safe online

Whether you're browsing, working, or gaming… You need to Protect Your Privacy!

We've got you covered with IDShield!

### Maximum Security

Including VPN, Malware Protection, Dark Web Monitoring, Password Manager, Privacy Management, Parental Controls, Privacy Scanner, Personal Identity Monitoring, Full-Service Restoration, Unlimited Service Guarantee and more. (Some services not available in Quebec).

Included with the IDShield Protection Plan through our Partners at LegalShield & IDShield. EDM

IDShield®

For coverage information or questions on how to make the LegalShield & IDShield Protection available for your employees contact:

**LESLIE UDY** | **LegalShield / IDShield**
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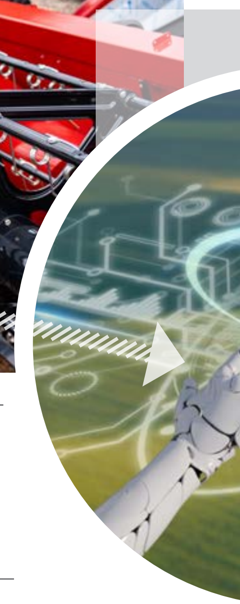
# Navigating the Evolving Challenges of Equipment Dealerships

by RÉMI SCHMALTZ, CEO, Brilliant Harvest



**The question facing equipment dealers today is not just how to survive in this changing environment but how to thrive by modernizing their operations to better serve their customers.**

**As agriculture continues to evolve into a data-driven industry, equipment dealers are finding themselves at a crossroads.**

Farmers now rely on more sophisticated machinery than ever before, incorporating everything from precision planting technologies to advanced GPS systems. While this technology revolution offers great potential for increasing efficiency and yields, it also presents new challenges for equipment dealers. Supporting customers through the complexities of modern machinery often requires detailed knowledge of a wide array of equipment, frequent updates, and the ability to provide quick troubleshooting solutions.

The challenge extends beyond understanding the equipment itself. Dealers are tasked with managing complex customer needs, resolving operational issues, and navigating the intricacies of equipment maintenance schedules. In an era where time is money—especially for farmers—the ability to provide timely and accurate support is more crucial than ever. This leaves dealerships with multiple pain points, such as:

- **INADEQUATE CUSTOMER SUPPORT TOOLS**
  Traditional phone and email-based customer support systems often struggle to manage the increasing volume and complexity of customer inquiries.
- **OVERLOADED STAFF**
  Without tools that can automate routine tasks, dealership staff find themselves bogged down with repetitive inquiries, leaving them less time for high-value activities like sales and relationship building.
- **OUTDATED TECHNOLOGY**
  Many dealerships lack the modern digital tools necessary to keep up with the speed and sophistication of today's agricultural landscape. This can lead to inefficiencies, errors, and ultimately dissatisfied customers.

The question facing equipment dealers today is not just how to survive in this changing environment but how to thrive by modernizing their operations to better serve their customers.

## The Growing Importance of AI in Agriculture

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly becoming a cornerstone of modern business across industries, and agriculture is no exception. While some might still view AI as a futuristic concept, it's already making waves in sectors like finance, healthcare, automotive, and retail.

For equipment dealers, AI presents a unique opportunity to revolutionize how they manage customer support and internal operations. AI-powered tools, such as virtual helpdesk apps, can be integrated into dealerships to support both customers and staff in real-time. These systems use natural language processing and machine learning to provide quick, accurate answers to common customer inquiries, from basic product information to troubleshooting complex machinery issues.

But why is AI so well-suited for the agricultural equipment sector?

- **DATA PROCESSING AT SCALE**
  AI excels at analyzing and processing large amounts of data quickly. For equipment dealers, this means that AI can sort through vast amounts of technical specifications, customer history, and maintenance schedules to provide instant answers.
- **LEARNING AND IMPROVING OVER TIME**
  Machine learning allows AI systems to continually improve based on past interactions. As more customers interact with the AI, it becomes better at identifying patterns, predicting common issues, and refining its responses.
- **24/7 AVAILABILITY:**
  Farmers don't operate on a 9-to-5 schedule, and neither should dealership support and sales. With AI, dealerships can offer continuous customer support, ensuring that farmers have access to the information they need whenever they need it.

The incorporation of AI doesn't just benefit customers—it also has a profound impact on dealership operations. Staff no longer have to waste time answering repetitive questions or sifting through manuals to find the correct troubleshooting step. Instead, they can focus on more strategic tasks like building customer relationships, securing new sales, and offering expert advice.

## Common Misconceptions About AI in Dealerships

While the benefits of AI are significant, misconceptions and concerns about the technology remain, especially in industries that have traditionally relied on human expertise. Here are some common misconceptions about AI and how dealerships can overcome them:

**Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly becoming a cornerstone of modern business across industries, and agriculture is no exception.**

- **"AI will replace human jobs"**
  One of the most pervasive myths about AI is that it will render human employees obsolete. In reality, AI is designed to augment human capabilities, not replace them. By automating routine tasks, AI allows staff to focus on more complex, value-adding activities. For example, instead of spending hours answering the same customer queries, dealership staff can use that time to close more deals or provide personalized service.
- **"AI is too complicated to integrate into existing systems"**
  Another common concern is that implementing AI will require a complete overhaul of existing systems. However, modern AI solutions are built to be user-friendly and easy to integrate. Many AI tools can be deployed alongside existing CRM systems or customer support platforms, meaning the learning curve for staff is minimal.
- **"Customers won't like interacting with AI"**
  While some customers may prefer speaking to a human representative, studies show that many appreciate the speed and convenience that AI offers. In fact, a well-designed AI system can improve the customer experience by providing fast, accurate answers without the need for customers to wait on hold or navigate complex phone trees.
- **"AI isn't safe or reliable"**
  As with any technology, security and reliability are valid concerns. However, AI systems used in dealerships are subject to the same stringent security protocols as any other business software. Furthermore, AI's ability to continually learn from past interactions means that it can become even more reliable over time, offering more accurate solutions with each use.

By addressing these misconceptions head-on, dealers can better understand how AI fits into their operations and how it can enhance their ability to serve customers.

## Embracing AI: A Necessity for Dealerships

So, why should equipment dealers embrace AI now? The answer lies in the increasing complexity of the agricultural landscape and the rising expectations of today's customers. Dealerships face capacity and budget issues when trying to provide top-tier service to customers that aren't their premium customers. Farmers are demanding more from their equipment and the dealers who support them. They need faster, more reliable answers and solutions—and they need them around the clock.

Dealerships that invest in AI can provide:

- **FASTER RESPONSE TIMES**
  With AI handling common customer inquiries, response times are significantly reduced, leading to improved customer satisfaction.
- **REDUCED STAFF WORKLOAD**
  By automating repetitive tasks, AI frees up dealership staff to focus on high-value activities such as sales and in-depth customer support.
- **BETTER DECISION-MAKING**
  AI's ability to process large amounts of data in real-time provides dealerships with valuable insights into customer needs, equipment performance, and operational efficiencies.
- **ENHANCED CUSTOMER LOYALTY**
  Dealerships that offer faster, more accurate support are likely to see an increase in customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Moreover, AI isn't just a short-term solution. As technology continues to evolve, so will the capabilities of AI systems. Dealers who embrace AI today will be better positioned to adapt to future innovations and continue meeting the needs of their customers.

To see the benefits of AI in action, we can look at dealerships that have already adopted AI-powered solutions. For example, dealers working with AI-based platforms have reported significant improvements in both customer satisfaction and operational efficiency. These dealers found that customers appreciated getting immediate answers to their queries, while their own teams benefited from reduced workloads.

In some cases, these AI tools even helped dealers boost their sales by allowing staff to focus more on proactive customer engagement rather than reactive customer service.

## The Future of Equipment Dealerships

As the demands on equipment dealerships grow, AI is poised to play an even more important role in shaping the future of the industry. The dealers who adopt AI today are setting themselves up for long-term success by improving their ability to serve customers, reduce operational bottlenecks, and stay competitive.

By embracing AI, equipment dealers are not just responding to the current needs of their customers—they are positioning themselves as forward-thinking leaders in the industry. The tools are available now, and the future of the dealership experience is already taking shape. EDM

**RÉMI SCHMALTZ**, CEO and Founder of Brilliant Harvest.

**RÉMI SCHMALTZ** has farming in his blood. His family has been in agribusiness for over 100 years, including farming, ag retail, and an equipment dealership. He created Brilliant Harvest, an AI-powered Helpdesk made to empower equipment dealer teams across the entire customer experience (CX), from purchase to repair.

# Skill Needs & Gaps in the Agricultural Industry

by BONNIE JOHNSON, AgCareers.com

**Finding suitable job candidates in the agricultural industry can be challenging, especially with the rapid advancements and evolving needs in the field.**

The skills required are diverse, ranging from technical expertise in precision agriculture to soft skills like teamwork.

The AgCareers.com Employee Skill Survey tackled this challenge head-on by providing insights into the skills employers are looking for and the skill gaps they face. AgCareers.com surveyed agricultural employers about work-ready skills and knowledge needed for new hires.

## Gaps

One significant finding of the survey is the preparedness gap between recent graduate hires and experienced new hires. Employers noted that experienced hires tend to be more prepared with work-ready skills than new graduates. However, both groups have notable skill gaps, with Problem Solving & Decision-Making Skills being the critical area for improvement.

## Needs

In terms of the most critical skills across all levels of employment, Problem Solving & Decision Making, Organization & Planning Skills, and Teamwork emerged as the top necessary skills. It's important to note that these top three are all employability, or soft skills. Conversely, employers considered skills like Data Analysis, Information Processing, and Sales, Persuasion, & Influence as the least necessary, indicating a shift in the industry's skills landscape.

## Professional Development

Professional development is crucial for both employers and employees to stay competitive in the industry. Employers benefit from enhanced skills and innovation, while employees gain knowledge, satisfaction, and possible career growth.

> **One significant finding of the survey is the preparedness gap between recent graduate hires and experienced new hires.** In terms of the most critical skills across all levels of employment, **Problem Solving & Decision Making, Organization & Planning Skills, and Teamwork emerged as the top necessary skills.**

Over 80% of the agricultural employers surveyed provide funding for individual employee professional development. General professional training or soft skills were the most desired opportunity. Employers noted that their current employees and new hires would benefit from verbal skills training, including communication with stakeholders, along with management training. These skills are essential for navigating the industry's complexities and driving growth and innovation.

## Knowledge Areas

The survey also explored specific knowledge areas crucial for agriculture and food sector employees. The survey asked employers if their employees needed knowledge in Agronomy & Precision Agriculture, Data Science and Digital Agriculture, Animal Science, Food Science, & Sustainability; the most notable knowledge requirements were in Agronomy & Precision Agriculture areas. The highest value topics in these fields were crop consulting and soil science.

AGCareers.com

**The AgCareers.com Employee Skills Survey** offers a comprehensive view of the skills landscape in the industry. By addressing the identified skill gaps and focusing on critical areas of knowledge and development, companies can better prepare their workforce for the challenges and opportunities ahead, ultimately driving growth and innovation in the industry.

There is a Canadian and US version of the AgCareers.com Skills Survey Report; download your free copy of the full report here. https://www.agcareers.com/reports.cfm EDM

**BONNIE JOHNSON** is a professional marketing specialist. She supports the AgCareers.com team and brand through her extensive marketing and communications experience.

**BONNIE JOHNSON** has more than twenty years of professional marketing experience, including nine years with AgCareers.com. As a marketing specialist, she supports the AgCareers.com team and brand through marketing and communications efforts. This includes internal and external communications, email marketing, company branding, market research, and data analysis. Please send questions and/or comments to bonnie.johnson@agcareers.com.

# Celebrating 25 Years:

## Joanne Olson's Remarkable Journey with the Association

**This year marks a significant milestone for Joanne Olson, who is celebrating her 25th work anniversary with our association.**

Joanne first joined us in 1999 as an executive assistant, and over the years, her role has evolved in tandem with the needs of our organization and its members.

Currently, Joanne serves as our corporate secretary and managing editor for both of our association's magazines: *Equipment Dealer Magazine* – U.S. and *Equipment Dealer Magazine* – Canada. Her leadership extends beyond editorial responsibilities; she is also the manager of our Canadian office located in Calgary, Alberta.

Joanne's diverse responsibilities highlight her versatility and dedication. She is instrumental in board governance, event planning, and organizing key events such as golf tournaments, board meetings, and conferences. Her skills extend to writing and editing articles for our magazines, providing copy editing for our corporate communications, and overseeing database management. Additionally, Joanne oversees the Canada Equipment Dealers Foundation Scholarship program, assists with billing and invoicing, addresses member requests, and provides her expertise wherever its needed.

Her commitment to excellence is reflected in her professional qualities—she is known for being organized, motivated, detail-oriented, respectful, personable, and consistently professional. Joanne values the relationships she has built with our dealers and industry partners, and her dedication to our community is evident in her daily work.

Beyond her professional achievements, Joanne is also the author of Grandpa's Farm Colouring Book for children, a delightful resource available free of charge to our association members. This project underscores her creativity and her commitment to making a positive impact on our agricultural community.

According to one of the association's top managers, **"Joey runs this ship like a cruise ship. All I have to do is wear the captain's hat and say grace before dinner."**

Joanne Olson's journey with us is a testament to her unwavering dedication and exceptional contributions. As we celebrate her 25 years with the association, we extend our deepest gratitude for her remarkable service and look forward to many more years of success together. EDM

# Long-time Association Colleague and Friend Passes Away

F.M. "MIKE" KRAEMER
1953 - 2024


**It is with deep sadness and heavy hearts that we say goodbye to Mike Kraemer, who passed away on October 8th, 2024.**

Mike started with NAEDA in 1992, working on corporate communications, marketing, public relations, program development, events and promotions, fundraising, managing editor of the national publication, and speech writing.

Following his years of service with NAEDA, he continued as a member consultant with WEDA and Creative Sales Solutions. His voice can be heard on many NAEDA podcasts, and his skill with the written word and publication finesse were at its finest when providing his expertise to the U.S. and Canadian editions of the *Equipment Dealer Magazine*.

Mike was also well known for his radio news writing and broadcasting and often commented that he had a "face for radio", but it was his deep voice that so eloquently drew listeners to hear what he had to say. His commitment and dedication to the dealers he served and the industry he loved was unwavering to the end.

Mike is a legend in the equipment industry and was known for his relationships and keen sense of humor. He truly was a one-of-a-kind colleague and friend and will be greatly missed by those who were lucky enough to know him.

'Til we meet again. EDM

# PROTECTING YOUR ASSETS:
## Insurance for equipment dealers

by CHRIS LEAHEY, Regional Association Manager, Federated Insurance


**It's important to mitigate risks to avoid having to make a claim in the first place.** Basic housekeeping practices can make a big difference, especially for equipment dealers with a lot of inventory on hand.

Equipment dealers in the commercial, industrial, and agricultural sectors face the same risks as any other business. However, they also face several risks unique to their industry. This means a one-size-fits-all insurance policy isn't necessarily going to be the best 'fit.'

So, who needs equipment dealers insurance? If you specialize in the sale, leasing, or rental of heavy equipment or machinery, or you service commercial vehicles, you need a tailor-made insurance policy to ensure your business is well protected.

Whether you run a small retail operation or manage a major equipment dealership, you can tailor your insurance to meet your needs. For example, if you sell agricultural machinery, your insurance needs will be different from a business that stores and distributes tires, or one that rents out heavy equipment to contractors or construction firms.

### What risks do equipment dealers face?

Like other businesses, equipment dealers are at risk of liability claims and property damage, which could result in out-of-pocket costs, interruption to their business, and even reputational damage.

That's why it's important to mitigate risks to avoid having to make a claim in the first place. Basic housekeeping practices can make a big difference, especially for equipment dealers with a lot of inventory on hand.

In shops and warehouses, for example, there are often several slip, trip, and fall hazards such as uneven surfaces, oil or grease spills, or even frayed carpets — and ultimately, you're responsible for the safety of anyone on your property, including customers, employees, and vendors.

Good housekeeping practices such as promptly cleaning up spills can help to prevent injuries — and help to avoid costly litigation. To avoid being held liable, restrict customers from entering your shop or warehouse; if they do need access, you may want to require the use of personal protective equipment.

These good housekeeping practices can also help to prevent fires. For example, oily rags, cloths, and paper towels are fire hazards and should be disposed of in metal containers with airtight, self-closing lids. Waste oil and other combustible waste materials should be kept in waste containers outside of your building, away from exterior walls.

Ideally, a yard should be fenced in, with a professional-grade padlock and a security system with cameras should be used. This can help to deter thieves, as well as acts of arson or vandalism. However, if your business is sidelined because of theft, arson, or vandalism, business interruption insurance can help protect your business from a loss of income.

Many equipment dealers must also deal with hazards that arise from the use of electrical and heating systems. If your building has been repurposed, or your electrical system has been patched over the years, you might notice uneven power flow, brittle wiring, or blown breakers, which could indicate electrical issues — and eventually lead to an electrical fire. If this is the case, thermal imaging can help detect any issues in your electrical system.

Batteries, equipment, and vehicles could also experience electrical shorts. And heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems — as well as specialized equipment such as air compressors — could spark a fire if not properly maintained.

### What type of insurance do equipment dealers need?

Even if you do everything right, sometimes things go wrong. That's where insurance comes in. Without it, you could end up paying for repair or replacement costs, expensive lawsuits, fines, or settlement fees out of your own pocket.

In addition to providing you with coverage for general **liability** and **property losses**, there are a few specialized coverages that can be included in equipment dealers insurance — such as blanket coverage for all of your business contents, whether on or off your premises. If you have a company vehicle (or an entire fleet), a commercial vehicle policy can help protect you, your employees, and any passengers.

**CHRIS LEAHEY** is the Regional Association Manager at Federated Insurance.

**CHRIS LEAHEY** is the Regional Association Manager for Federated Insurance. He has worked in the insurance industry for 18 years. For more information, please contact Chris at 780-932-3195 or chris.leahey@federated.ca

Other specialized coverages include:

- **MANUFACTURER'S FLOOR PLAN** includes coverage for floor-planned property and protects the value of any enhancements you've added to floor-plan equipment.
- **MECHANIC'S WARRANTY OF WORK** includes installation, labor, and dealer errors and omissions, as well as coverage for corrections from mistakes made through the installation of a defective part, or because of faulty work on customers' vehicles.
- **NEW EQUIPMENT SALES PROTECTION** helps cover claims or suits brought against you by a customer who is dissatisfied with equipment purchased from you.
- **TOOLS & EQUIPMENT** helps cover the cost of renting regular and computerized equipment if yours is damaged.
- **POLLUTION LIABILITY INSURANCE** is designed to help protect your business from costly expenses related to environmental damages.

## Keep your business safe with equipment dealers insurance

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Federated Insurance

# Growing your dealership group through mergers and acquisitions: A STRATEGIC GUIDE

by CHRIS SCHAUFELE, MNP

**With the right approach, M&A can unlock significant value and drive sustainable growth for your dealership group.**

Growth is essential for survival in the highly competitive equipment dealer industry.

For dealership groups looking to expand, mergers and acquisitions (M&A) offer a viable path to achieving scale, increasing market share, and enhancing operational efficiency.

You might be thinking more about these opportunities as interest rates are poised to fall over the coming months. Navigating the complexities of M&A requires careful planning, strategic execution, and a clear understanding of the benefits and challenges involved.

## What are the benefits of M&A?

Mergers and acquisitions involve combining two or more companies into one — either by merging them together or by one company acquiring another. For dealership groups, M&A can provide several advantages:

#### MARKET EXPANSION

Acquiring dealerships in new geographic regions can help a dealership group enter new markets quickly and efficiently.

#### ECONOMIES OF SCALE

Larger dealership groups can benefit from bulk purchasing, centralized operations, and shared resources. This leads to cost savings and improved profitability.

#### DIVERSIFICATION

M&A allows dealership groups to diversify their brand offerings, reducing dependency on a single manufacturer or market segment.

#### ENHANCED COMPETITIVE POSITION

Growing through M&A can strengthen a dealership group's market position, making it more competitive against larger national or regional players.

## Key considerations for a successful M&A strategy

According to research from Harvard Business Review, between 70 percent and 90 percent of M&As fail to return value. That's a concerning rate of failure — and could rightfully turn you away from exploring this opportunity. However, there are some ways to ensure you don't become a part of that majority:

### Strategic alignment

Ensure that the target dealership aligns with your group's strategic goals. Consider factors such as brand compatibility, market presence, and customer base.

A dealership located in a region where you currently have little to no presence could be a good fit if you are looking to increase your market coverage.

### Financial health

Conduct thorough due diligence to assess the financial health of the target dealership. Evaluate their balance sheets, income statements, and cash flow to understand potential risks and rewards. Be careful about estimating your ability to turn around an organization that is struggling with profitability — these situations can often be more complex than they appear from outside.

### Cultural fit

Integrating two companies involves blending corporate cultures. Assess whether the target dealership's culture will fit well with your own, as cultural clashes can derail the success of a merger.

Different approaches to sales practices, management styles, and work environments can all lead to cultural clashes. For example, if your dealership prioritizes building long-term relationships while the target dealership is focused on short-term gains, these differences can cause culture clashes in the future.

### Integration plan

Develop a detailed integration plan to combine operations, systems, and teams smoothly. Effective integration is crucial to realizing the benefits of the merger and minimizing disruptions.

### Pay a fair price

A major reason for failure is because the acquiring organization paid too much for the business. Working with external advisors and conducting thorough due diligence is the foundation of a successful deal for all involved.

Navigating the complexities of M&A requires careful planning, strategic execution, and a clear understanding of the benefits and challenges involved.



## Steps to execute an M&A transaction

A transaction can be a long process that takes two steps forward and one step back. These are the general steps that can apply to a transaction. However, it is important to remember that you may face unique hurdles along the way that are not captured here.

### IDENTIFY TARGETS

Research and identify potential acquisition targets that align with your strategic goals. Use market analysis, networking, and industry contacts to find suitable candidates.

### CONDUCT DUE DILIGENCE

Perform a thorough investigation of the target dealership's financials, operations, legal standing, and market position. This step is critical to uncovering any potential issues that could impact the success of the deal.

### NEGOTIATE TERMS

Engage in negotiations to agree on the terms of the acquisition. This includes the purchase price, payment structure, and any contingencies.

### SECURE FINANCING

Arrange the necessary financing for the acquisition. This may involve securing loans, issuing new equity, or using existing cash reserves.

### EXECUTE THE DEAL

Finalize the acquisition by signing the necessary legal documents and transferring ownership. This step often requires the assistance of legal and financial advisors.

### INTEGRATE OPERATIONS

Developing and implementing an integration plan to combine the operations of the acquired dealership with your existing group is the last step, but it can be the most important. Focus on aligning processes, systems, and teams to ensure a smooth transition.

## Potential challenges and how to overcome them

### Cultural integration

Differences in corporate culture can lead to friction. To overcome this, you need to proactively develop an integration strategy. Focus on fostering open communication, involving key stakeholders from both sides, and promoting a unified vision. Team members of the acquired organization can be hesitant about the situation, and you need to engage with their concerns to effectively integrate cultures.

### Operational disruptions

Integrating systems and processes can cause temporary disruptions. For example, your dealership may use a different dealership management system (DMS) than the target dealership, which can lead to challenges with data migration. Mitigate this risk by planning the integration in phases and providing adequate training and support to employees.

### Financial risks

Unexpected financial issues can arise during and after the acquisition. Conducting thorough due diligence and maintaining a healthy cash reserve can help manage these risks.

## Take the next steps

Growing a dealership group through M&A can be a powerful strategy for achieving long-term success in the equipment dealer industry. By carefully planning and executing each step of the M&A process, dealership groups can expand their market presence, achieve economies of scale, and enhance their competitive position. With the right approach, M&A can unlock significant value and drive sustainable growth for your dealership group.

For more information, contact a member of MNP's Dealerships team. We have the experience to act as a full-service advisor throughout the M&A process — from deal construction to post-integration strategy. EDM


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**CHRIS SCHAUFELE** is MNP's National dealership service leader and a Business Advisor with the Firm's Assurance and Accounting group in Surrey. With more than 15 years of experience working with equipment and automobile dealers, Chris oversees a dedicated team of professionals and the Firm's delivery of dealership services across Canada. Chris helps dealers and leasing companies, as well as business owners in other industries, ensuring they have the information they require to make strong business decisions. He delivers a full suite of assurance services, helps with tax planning and compliance and advises on a broad range of business issues. His expertise in accounting and assurance standards and keen understanding of the industry allow him to identify opportunities to help his clients succeed.

# Can Old Dogs Learn New Tricks?

by DR. LARRY COLE

**Thanks to Kelly Mathison, also a DI trainer, for asking this question – *Can Old Dogs Learn New Tricks?* Every dealership with whom I've interacted confronts this question. Keep reading.**

An old joke — How many psychologists are required to change a dead light bulb? See the answer inserted at the end of the next paragraph.

Habit strength creates the challenge. Neuroscience tells us the strength of a habit is determined by the wraps of a myelin sheath around neurons involved in the neurological highway supporting the behavior every time a behavior is used. So, let's take a supervisor who has been working for 20, 30, 40, or more years. Their habit strength becomes so strong over time that the behaviors become automatic, and they may lack self-awareness about what they are doing. To make matters worse, they may even deny any feedback that they're using inappropriate behavior. To finish the joke — *yes, one psychologist can change a dead light bulb if it wants to be changed*. If not, forget it, leave the dead light bulb where it is, and get used to the dark. The sad story is, if that dead light bulb was a person and got overlooked for a promotion or, worse yet, fired, they're going to point fingers instead of deciding to accept responsibility for their behavior.

Another sad story is that an old dog (i.e., an animal) can learn a new behavior to get a "treat" faster than people can change their behaviors. Dogs don't have human cognitive potential, so they respond to rewards faster than humans.

When working with people, we must remember that our interpersonal skills are learned. That is, a positive consequence encourages us to continue using the behavior, or the behavior helps us avoid an unpleasant consequence.

To make matters more complicated is the person's level of self-awareness. Optimally, the person is acutely aware of their behaviors. If so, that provides the promise of change. Unfortunately, there are many instances in which the person is unaware and completely denies behaving in the manner described to them. Denying the use of inappropriate or toxic behavior is the end.


**When working with people, we must remember that our interpersonal skills are learned.** That is, a positive consequence encourages us to continue using the behavior, or the behavior helps us avoid an unpleasant consequence.

Let's be more optimistic and say the individual is self-aware, so the next hurdle is accepting responsibility for their behavior. This sounds simple, but writing this article reminds me of two toxic supervisors. One blamed their mother, so I comically asked, "If your mother changes, would you change also?" The other individual provided a similar answer, saying that it is a genetic thing and he, therefore, can't change. Both were fired.

Let's continue with a degree of optimism. Successful change requires a strong push to help the other person recognize their leadership practices are detrimental to them continuing their leadership journey. As simple as it sounds, the recognition doesn't come easy for two reasons. The individual has been deriving some benefit that has been reinforcing their behavior for years, thereby the habit strength is very strong, and it's possible there is little to no awareness of using ineffective leadership practices. Without recognition of the need to change, there is no change.

Let's continue to be optimistic, and the individual recognizes the need to change. The second strong energy source can result from the advantages associated with the change. Often, the advantage is to maintain their employment!

Continuing our optimistic theme, the next step is for the individual to see themselves, in their mind's eye, using the new leadership practices. People will only do what they see themselves doing.

Now, the hardest part… changing. Every day, temptations will literally pull the individual to use the old, ineffective behaviors that need to be discarded. Unfortunately, the old behaviors can't just be thrown away. Change requires substituting the new for the old, and that requires focused practice. If the old dog really wants to change, they need to list the target behaviors so they can readily be seen throughout the day and have strong support from those with whom they work to hold them accountable for using the new leadership practices. Soliciting this support may be challenging because, by this time, employees want to see the person gone.

Continuing the optimism, the last step the old dog must take is receiving a reward for using new behaviors. That, too, is more challenging than giving a treat to an animal for doing what you want the animal to do. The person in question must track their own success and pat themselves on the back in recognition of their success. Positive recognition from co-workers is a crucial step and may be challenging for the previously cited reason.

I wish I could be more assuring that successful change occurs, but as I tried to illustrate, many hurdles must be overcome to shed the old and strengthen the habit of the new. EDM

**DR. LARRY COLE** is a lead trainer for the North American Equipment Dealers Association's Dealer Institute.

**LARRY COLE, PH.D.,** is a lead trainer for and consultant to the North American Equipment Dealers Association's Dealer Institute. He provides onsite training and public courses to improve business leadership effectiveness and internal and external customer service. Please send questions and / or comments to Larry at teammax100@gmail.com

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  **Recruitment**
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- **PHASE 3**
  **Immigration**
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- **PHASE 4**
  **Post Hire**
  Employee Settlement: Design settlement package for relocation.

  Cultural Awareness Training: Mandatory training for new hires and optional training for Dealers.

## CONTACT US:

**Dale Hindmarsh**
403.519.0669
dale.hindmarsh@archstaffing.ca

# The Best Marketing Plans Include a Phone Call

by SCOTT BRIGDEN

**Share your marketing plans with your staff early and make sure everyone knows the goals and who we will target.** So often, marketing information goes out to staff through an email that we assume they read.

**The options are limitless for our customers in today's marketplace.**

Their buying habits, how they shop, and the methods used to get your message out to potential customers are changing. As you head into the fall and winter months, having the right plan to promote your aftermarket programs should be a top priority.

Our marketing teams work tirelessly to put together the right parts and service programs for your customers. There are numerous methods to get your message out, from posters and flyers in your dealership to direct mail or email campaigns and even social media. Ensuring the people in your area know all the great things you have to offer is a real challenge. Equally important is that your staff is well-versed in your marketing efforts and are ready to handle any leads that come their way. Whether it's parts or service, your staff are expected to close the sale from all the marketing work. But if they're waiting for someone to call or walk through your front door, we're missing the most crucial piece of any marketing campaign - asking for the sale!

Share your marketing plans with your staff early and make sure everyone knows the goals and who we will target. So often, marketing information goes out to staff through an email that we assume they read. Sorry to say, but a majority of them will not. We also assume the department manager will review the programs with their staff, but this is not always the case. At the beginning of every parts and service campaign, take the time to introduce this properly so that you know everyone is on board with the goals ahead. Provide them with a target customer list of who you know owns the equipment being targeted in the area and have a way to track when calls are made to each of these potential sales. Finally, every department manager should have clear timelines for the program and follow up with them. Parts and service managers can live in a whirlwind of activity, and they will appreciate the support you provide.

Finally, get the staff to make phone calls and ask for the sale. For most people, making these calls can be very intimidating. However, with practice, they can become more confident and empowered. Give them a list of Frequently Asked Questions and the answers they will need. A call script is also a very helpful tool to help them ease the anxiety of making a sales call. Have the department team build the script together or work as a team to make your provided script their own. Encourage them to practice with each other making a sales call. Have someone volunteer to be the customer and do a mock call right at the dealership where everyone in the department can see it happen and support and coach each other.

**Get the staff to make phone calls and ask for the sale. For most people, making these calls can be very intimidating.** However, with practice, they can become more confident and empowered. Give them a list of Frequently Asked Questions and the answers they will need.

I have watched this activity several times in training sessions, and it is amazing to see people get more comfortable as they watch others and try for themselves. Making a sales call is right up there with public speaking; it is very scary for most people. Practice is so important to ease those fears.

Don't let the hard work and money invested in marketing programs go to waste. Develop a plan to get the front line staff engaged and involved in making those sales calls. If you don't ask for the sale, your chances of getting it go way down, so get staff engaged and committed to building relationships with your customers one call at a time. EDM

**SCOTT BRIGDEN** is a trainer with NAEDA's Dealer Institute. Prior to joining DI as an aftermarket specialist and trainer, Scott held various training and leadership positions across several dealerships in Canada, and he currently manages a truck repair shop. He looks forward to helping dealers succeed by improving their parts and service operations.

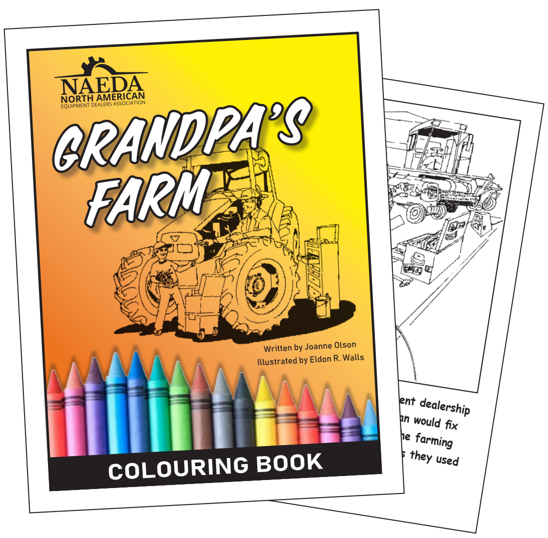
**TOP METRICS TO WATCH** is an ongoing feature brought to you by the association's Dealer Institute to help dealers better understand key performance indicators and industry metrics to effectively manage their businesses.

**SCOTT BRIGDEN,** Aftermarket Specialist and Trainer with NAEDA's Dealer Institute.

## HERE'S WHAT YOU SOLD
Equipment Retail Sales In Units

AEM
DATA PROVIDED BY THE ASSOCIATION OF EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURERS

| Canada - AUGUST 2024 Ag Tractor and Combine Report | AUGUST | | | Y-T-D MAY | | | AUGUST 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2024 | 2023 | %CHG | 2024 | 2023 | %CHG | BEGINNING INVENTORY |
| 2WD < 40 HP | 947 | 1,389 | -31.8 | 8,791 | 10,654 | -17.5 | 10,325 |
| 2WD < 100 HP | 300 | 408 | -26.5 | 2,605 | 3,522 | -26.0 | 4,792 |
| 2WD 100+ HP | 243 | 257 | -5.4 | 2,233 | 2,380 | -6.2 | 2,601 |
| **Total 2WD Farm Tractors** | **1,490** | **2,054** | **-27.5** | **13,629** | **16,556** | **-17.7** | **17,718** |
| **Total 4WD Farm Tractors** | **66** | **51** | **29.4** | **665** | **563** | **18.1** | **167** |
| **Total Farm Tractors** | **1,556** | **2,105** | **-26.1** | **14,294** | **17,119** | **-16.5** | **17,885** |
| **Self-Prop Combines** | **115** | **181** | **-36.5** | **1,251** | **1,256** | **-0.4** | **471** |

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NAEDA NORTH AMERICAN EQUIPMENT DEALERS ASSOCIATION

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*Equipment Dealer Magazine* is the official publication of the North American Equipment Dealers Association.

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