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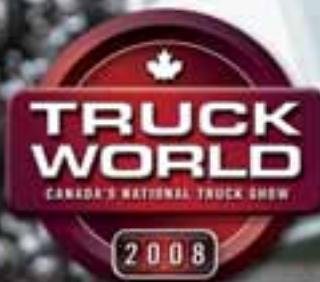


Today's Trucking

The Business Trucking Industry

April 2008

www.todaystrucking.com



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know about hybrids

The Einwechter Approach

How one of Canada's sharpest
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Kenneth R. Wilson
Award Winner



Member



Getting your drivers' backs

Just listened to the latest Truck Talk ("Jim Park's Truck Talk," todaystrucking.com).

It was fascinating to hear a first-hand account of why people are leaving the industry.

It's interesting the driver spoke favorably about his carrier but was mostly having issues with other groups—shippers, authorities, etc.

There may not be much you can do about a border agent having a bad day, but shouldn't the carrier be taking the lead on resolving the issues with shippers? Seems to me that carriers should be ensuring positive workplace experiences for their employees and that includes setting expectations for customers. If carriers are going to let shippers treat their employees poorly, they really shouldn't be surprised when these people quit the industry.

I've certainly walked away from customers who refused to treat my staff with respect.

Mark Murrell,
President, CarriersEDGE
Markham, Ont.



Jim Park

Welcome to Windsor hassle

Ontario needs a new freeway into an industrial zone, away from the existing Ambassador Bridge, crossing the border into a U.S. area where state-of-the-art technology will be present and where they stay away from protecting private interests.

Regardless of whether it's the city of Windsor, the bridge, or the local commerce that benefits from the heavy congestion, the drivers are the victims.

In the name of all our drivers who have suffered for years, in the name of productivity, let's get out of the city that treats drivers with zero respect and let's move toward the future.

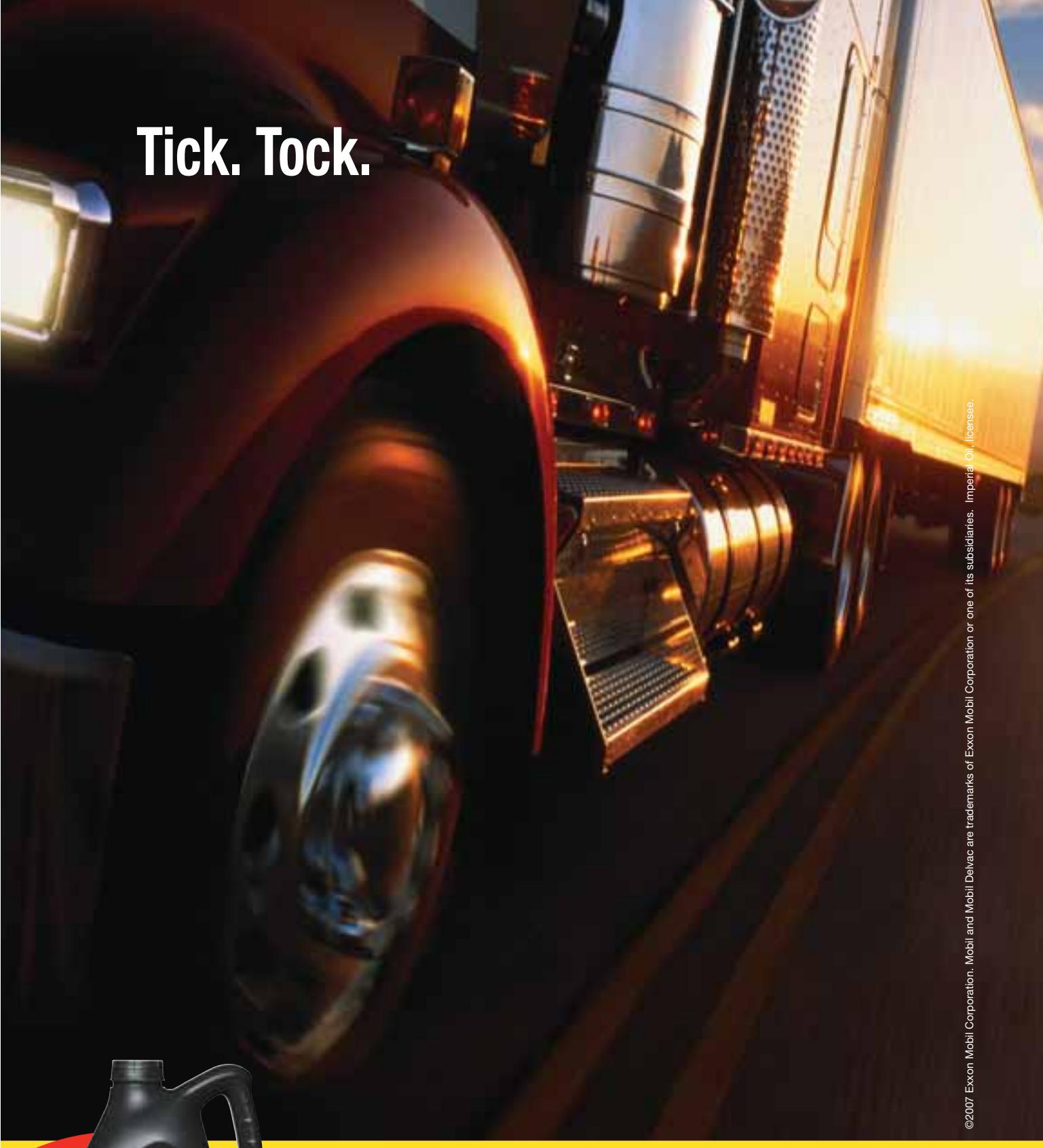
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Mobil Delvac 

By Rolf Lockwood

Complaint or Opportunity

With customers hard to find, make sure they're not also hard to keep



Sometimes you just can't win. No matter what you say, that complaining customer remains unhappy. And maybe even takes his business elsewhere.

In any commercial enterprise, there's nothing worse.

But does it have to happen that way? I'd suggest that it doesn't, that it almost never has to mean loss of business if you go about things thoughtfully and by all means calmly. Like most challenges, success here is a matter of that elusive quality we call common sense and of controlling the damage by simply listening to the customer.

So let the poor soul rant and then start from there. If you're very good, you'll turn an enemy into a friend because most people won't want to leave you. They won't want to acknowledge having made a mistake by connecting with you in the first place. So give them new reason to think they were right in choosing you and your company.

That act of listening has to start long before any complaint is registered, of course. Really, it should start within the first 30 seconds of your connection, long before the buyer has said "Yes, OK, let's do business." Truth is, if you're not listening at that moment, then you're not likely to get him anyway.

But it's not just about listening. What I think you have to do, in personal situations just as often as commercial ones, is develop the ability to put yourself in the other's shoes. Try to understand what he needs and wants, what makes him angry, what makes him smile. Solid relationships of any sort are always based on that foundation.

It's a principle of good journalism too, and I've tried hard to apply it here. I'm sure I don't always succeed, but there's no doubt that a well written story begins with a question: what does the reader—my customer—need to know? Way too often, perhaps more in the mainstream press than in the business-to-business press, writers see their story as some sort of jigsaw puzzle existing in a world of its own, bearing no connection to the reader. They grab this fact and that, usually the lowest-hanging fruit, and jam it all together so that it tracks in a more or less straight line, and then they're done. Finishing was more important than ensuring its usefulness.

But is it comprehensible? Has sufficient background been offered to make for easy understanding? Does it answer the questions readers are likely to have?

It's no different in business. Success comes in anticipating your customer's hopes and fears, answering his questions before he asks them, and making every aspect of his connection with you trans-

parent. Leave him no room to doubt, and if you screw up, start the repair by admitting your failure, listening to what your customer has to say about it, and then acting—that's crucial—to fix it.

Time for an admission: I've launched myself into this subject because I think I succeeded a couple of days ago in just such a situation with an unhappy customer of ours who was right to be displeased. So I listened, and now we're on the right path. I don't say that in self-congratulation, and it only occurred to me to write about it when I later received an e-mail newsletter about exactly this subject. The newsletter in question is from John Tschohl, an international service strategist (www.customer-service.com), and the title of this one is 'Don't Run from Complaining Customers'.

It seems like I could join the speaking circuit alongside this guy because he writes about an idea I've always thought was vitally important: that a customer's complaint is really a chance not just to fix things but to make them better. A chance to create a relationship where maybe there wasn't one before.

Here's what Tschohl writes: "When a customer complains, you should be grateful. Why? Because that customer is giving you the opportunity to make things right and to retain her business. Research shows that only about 4 percent of customers will tell you when they have a problem. The other 96 percent simply won't do business with you again. Instead, they quietly fume and take their business—and their money—elsewhere. They also will tell an average of 10 other people about the problem they had with your organization."

Those numbers are pretty compelling, and scary too. Think about that: nearly every unhappy customer won't tell you that he's dissatisfied, let alone explain why he's ticked. He'll just split, and you may never know why. Damned hard to move forward if you don't know what you're doing wrong.

So maybe you should simply ask your customer every once in a while? Maybe even demand, in a kindly way, a frank exchange of views, as they say. Make it clear that you want to know that you don't take his continuing business for granted.

Assume nothing and you'll have taken the first step to a good relationship. ▲

Rolf Lockwood is editorial director and publisher of *Today's Trucking*. You can reach him at 416-614-5825 or rolf@todaystrucking.com.

Dispatch

BY MARCO BEGHETTO

BELOW:
Enter
the
miles
traveled
each day

Wake-Up Call

Rather than tinkering with hourly parameters, a current pilot project is addressing driver fatigue from within. HOS regulators like what they see.

TIRED AND TRUE: A new fatigue management program launched in Western Canada could change how hours-of-service rules are governed in North America.

As regulators have spent the last few years breaking down a trucker's driving ability by the hour, a handful of western minds got together in an effort to get to the core of driver fatigue.

Nearly 10 years in the making, the North American

Fatigue Management Program was launched in Alberta at the start of the millennium and has since picked up a few other participants along the way.

The program is still in the testing phases, but it is nearing deployment and could revolutionize the way

truckers are dispatched. It's designed to determine when truckers should be driving or whether they need to pull over, based on personal differences.

"It's a way to ensure professional drivers don't fall asleep at the wheel; basically that's what hours-of-service

is—fatigue management," Roger Clarke, executive director of Vehicle Safety and Carrier Services with Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation, says.

Recognizing some people have sleep disorders that are treatable, the program puts an emphasis on individuals

Driver fatigue

by analyzing the solo trucker's own circadian rhythm, his scheduling, and lifestyle differences.

"You might not be a morning person, while I am, I might have sleep apnea and you don't," explained Clarke. "It's not just one thing and that's why it's comprehensive. It recognizes personal differences and that's what's important."

The continental program was hatched in Alberta as a partnership between Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation and the province's trucking association. It was inspired by a joint study on driver fatigue by Transport Canada and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) in 1999.

"That study was a review of hours-of-service, because it's always been about [HOS]," noted Clarke. "It gave us all kinds of ideas about nighttime driving, napping and sleep debt, which needs to be addressed; and that study served as a framework for HOS rules in the U.S. and Canada."

There was another tidbit in the study recommending an effective fatigue management program. What did that mean? Clarke

and Bob Drinnan of the Alberta Motor Transport Association (AMTA) did not know either, but were determined to find out.

"We had a concept and there are all kinds of research out there regarding napping, circadian rhythm and sleep apnea. We put all the known aspects of fatigue together and built a comprehensive fatigue management program," Clarke says. "It includes dispatch guidelines, screening for sleep disorders, medical intervention [so a driver won't lose their job due to treatment], and training."

That latter aspect is important because to address fatigue people need to understand it first—and not just drivers, but their families and those at their workplace too.

"There has to be buy-in, and the company has to say they won't let someone drive fatigued," added Clarke. "If you're tired you need to have the ability to say, 'you can count me out or I need to rest first.'"

The Canadian Sleep Institute—a centre on the outskirts of Calgary—helped put the program together and took on a large part of the research.

ACADEMIC AWAKENING: Drivers may be surprised to find out which hour is the riskiest behind the wheel.

SEVEN OR 11?

STUDY FINDS NO LINK BETWEEN DRIVING TIME AND FATIGUE-RELATED ACCIDENT RISK

Special-interest coalitions and so-called public safety groups in the U.S. and on this side of the border spend a lot of time and money trying to prove that a longer a trucker stays behind the wheel, the more dangerous he is to other travelers.

That theory, however, doesn't jive with much of the credible science, which concludes that it's not so much about the amount of sleep a driver gets, but instead the quality of rest at the right time in the circadian cycle.

A new study to evaluate the safety impact of U.S. hours-of-service regulations echoes that theory, suggesting that it makes no statistical difference whether a driver is on the road for 10 or 11 hours. Actually, according to the study by Virginia Tech's Transportation Institute (commissioned by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration), the first hour on the road is the most risky.

That theory effectively puts a wet blanket on claims that new HOS rules that increase allowable driving hours from 10 to 11 create tired truckers and increase the likelihood of accidents due to fatigue. (The new rules also require a 10-consecutive-hour break versus

eight hours previously).

In analyzing the risk of driving hours one through 11, the study took a closer look at how critical incidents may vary as a function of driving shift and time of day.

"...The results of this study do not support the hypothesis that there is an increased risk resulting from commercial motor vehicle drivers driving in the 11th driving-hour as compared to the 10th driving-hour, or any hour," VTTI's director, Dr. Richard Hanowski, said in a press release.

"In fact, a significant spike in the rate of critical incidents was found during the first driving-hour and was found across many different analyses."

Additional study found a strong time-of-day effect, which, upon closer examination, appeared to have resulted from hour-by-hour traffic density variations.

The study authors estimate that exposure to heavy traffic conditions, and possibly sleep inertia and an increase in complex driving situations that may be typical in the first driving-hour, may have influenced the increase in critical incidents recorded in this time period. (See Jim Park's, *Driver side*, pg. 25, for more on the story).

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Dispatches

To ensure added safety, the Worker's Compensation Board of Alberta also got involved. The coalition then recruited four carriers—Mantei's Transport, Canadian Freightways, Grimshaw Trucking, and bus company Greyhound—"who were willing to stick out their necks for us," says Clarke.

The carriers participated in Phase 2—the first on-road deployment—of the study.

Meanwhile, other jurisdictions began to take notice. Quebec's trucking association and safety board enlisted and the FMCSA also got involved, adding a prominent U.S. carrier to the study.

But Clarke is of the opinion that the fatigue monitoring program can supercede the HOS regime.

Phase 3 began a year ago and is operating in three different regions: ECL in Alberta, Robert Transport in Quebec, and J.B. Hunt in California.

"We have 40 drivers in each region, for a total of 120 drivers, which will give us enough for statistical verification," added Clarke.

"We need to find what impediments there are in a carrier's operation. We're taking it out of the lab and putting it into the real world."

This stage of the study is supposed to be completed in September 2008. Following that, stakeholders will

attempt to launch a program across North America.

What this means for future hours-of-service rules remains unclear at this point. The Fatigue Management Study has been conducted within current hours of service regulations, so the two can mutually coincide.

But Clarke, a 30-year industry veteran and a regulator who has helped shape HOS regulations, is of the opinion that the fatigue monitoring program can supercede the HOS regime.

"The potential for a comprehensive fatigue management program is significant to the point that if we were able to successfully deploy it in a carrier, HOS would be irrelevant; it's not as effective at combating fatigue

in terms of making sure drivers don't fall asleep at the wheel," explained Clarke.

"If it came to pass that regulators thought it was better, we would build a certification process around full implementation.

"I think, theoretically, a driver could point to his company and say we're on the fatigue management program and that would be okay. But that's very controversial right now."

As if hours-of-service wasn't controversial enough. But who knows, perhaps such a program is exactly what's needed to bridge longstanding differences of opinion regarding hours of work rules in North America.

— Steve MacLeod

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Dispatches

Windsor-Detroit

The Trucks Go Marching In

If questioned, most truckers would undoubtedly say that the biggest problem with the Windsor-Detroit gateway is the lack of infrastructure for the number of trucks that bottleneck at the mouth of the border.

For decades, there's been an avalanche of "solutions" proposed to fix the problem. Some of them make sense—expanding border capacity with a new bridge or twinning the current Ambassador, for example—but almost all attempt to put the trailer before the tractor, so to speak.

That, anyway, is what Ann Arquette and Kathy Ouellette believe. They have

a point—and, of course, their own plan.

"It's a matter of building foundations first," says Arquette, director of corporate affairs for Border Gateways, a Windsor firm that's been pitching an ITS-based truck traffic management system for Southern Ontario border crossings.

The company is vying to manage a public-private "truck marshalling yard" being proposed by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) in Windsor, Sarnia-Port Huron, and Fort Erie-Buffalo. The first facility—designed for the outskirts east of Windsor, off of Highway 401—would act as the staging area for a complete "trade corridor management system," as

Ouellette dubs the concept.

The theory is that a truck-marshalling yard in the Windsor-Essex region would reduce border queuing by ensuring all truckers' administrative and Customs reporting info is completed before approaching the border. It would also provide truck storage real estate during periods of high congestion.

Once cleared, the trucks would be metered through to the border, resulting in more efficient flow and less trucks idling close to homes and businesses inside the city.

The concept has been discussed for a while, but moved a step closer to reality this spring when

Border Gateways secured capital financing by signing a partnership agreement with John Laing PLC, a U.K.-based specialist in public sector infrastructure assets.

The up-front capital could make Border Gateways the frontrunner for a long-term concession agreement with provincial and federal governments.

Some argue, however, that there's little justification for such a facility if other capacity expansion projects proceed, such as the construction of a new bridge in southwest Windsor and a supporting, dedicated truck route.

But the way the Border Gateways ladies see it, a

It would also provide truck storage real estate during periods of high congestion.

We do the heavy lifting to



Randy Halseth
Regional Service Manager
Great Lakes Region

truck marshalling yard would only complement those solutions. And once implemented, it would paint a clearer picture on how to proceed with them.

"We continue to discuss increased capacity as the way to solve the world's problems. But if you look at Sarnia, which already has increased capacity and double-stacked rail tunnels, and all these wonderful things, they still have backups. So, what's missing?" the spirited Arquette asks rhetorically. "If not this, then what?"

Other critics suggest that the center would be a net loser when there's long periods of downtime in traffic. And why wouldn't truckers simply go to crossings where they don't have to pay extra to use a marshalling yard?



TRADE TRIANGLE: Eventually, Border Gateways hopes to operate three marshalling yards on behalf of the MTO.

Well, theoretically, all three major Southern Ontario crossings would have these facilities eventually; and one charge would grant drivers access to all locations. Plus, explains Arquette, the model being negotiated with the government—typical of other procurement deals with the province—is an "availability

fee" system that's based on just that—availability.

Besides, she continues, there's plenty of monetary benefit for truckers who can wrap up all their pre-crossing requirements at one convenient location.

"Drivers have the unique need to coordinate several requirements on-the-fly...

Elimination of several potential stops along with the ability to maximize driving time with predictable route planning is invaluable to the commercial operator. Time is money and predictability is a valuable asset that cannot be offered with new access roads or a new crossing alone."

CONTINGENCY CONTROL:

While a separate bridge would give the region badly needed border-crossing redundancy in the event of a terrorist attack, there's still no mechanism to organize and prioritize freight so that traffic chaos would be mitigated during such a catastrophe, Arquette argues.

"From a security standpoint, if we understand we live in a post 9-11 world and

give you more uptime.



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disruptions should be planned for, what is our recovery plan? "How do we take 16 kilometers of trucks and prioritize who's going to go and when? What would a new border crossing do for that?"

But even if we're spared from another attack, the facility's main purpose would be to assist truckers—especially owner-operators—with the myriad of pre-crossing processes, Ouellette reiterates.

Effectively, RFID and weigh-in-motion technology would electronically capture carrier and shipment information from the highway and by cross-linking the info with Customs databases, the center would clear drivers to proceed to the border or, as

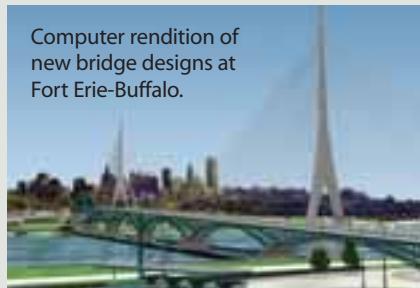
TALE OF TWO BRIDGES

While it insists that one bridge is more than enough for the Windsor-Detroit border, the Ambassador Bridge continues to forge ahead with a proposal to build a second crossing at Ontario's second-busiest border gateway.

The owners of the private Ambassador Bridge in Detroit filed paperwork with the U.S. State Department

earlier this year seeking permission to build and operate a separate structure across the Niagara River at Buffalo, under the name Ambassador Niagara Signature Bridge.

The \$300 million, four-lane bridge would be less than two miles north of the existing Peace Bridge. The Ambassador's hope is to handle all the commercial traffic, while the Peace Bridge would process passenger vehicles only.



Computer rendition of new bridge designs at Fort Erie-Buffalo.

The Buffalo and Fort Erie Peace Bridge Authority says the company is trying to undermine its own plans for Peace Bridge expansion.

That's ironic, considering that's what the Ambassador folks have been complaining about in Windsor, where public officials want to build a second bridge a few kilometers southwest of the existing crossing.

That said, Peace Bridge general manager Ron Rienas says he's happy the permit application has been filed so it "can finally receive some scrutiny... So far there hasn't been any of that."

Questions still linger, though, as to whether a second bridge in the region is even legal. In both 2004 and 2006 Transport Canada cited a law that's been on the books since 1923 that thwarts any plans of a privately owned secondary international border crossing.



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Dispatches

needed, assist them with paperwork or e-manifest transmissions.

Reportedly, about 30 percent of the vehicles heading to the U.S. through Windsor every day arrive at the border with incomplete paperwork. That translates into a lot of trucks idling in the most populous parts of the city.

"Drivers are transient. They don't have administrative help or informational help. But when they show up at Customs they're sitting ducks," says Ouellette.

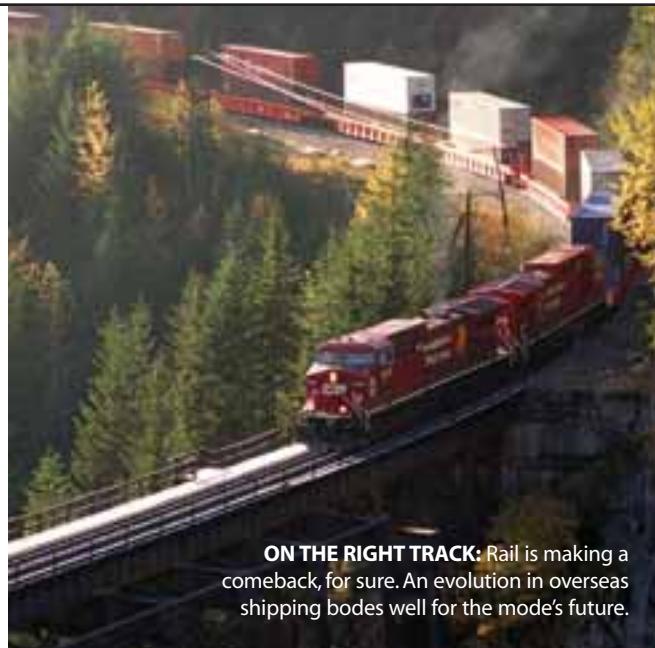
With the marshalling facility in place, those carriers could temporarily store the problem freight at the shipper's expense and proceed to the border. "Effectively," she says, "the good freight goes."

Intermodal

Working on the Rail

When the world's richest man is all of a sudden sweet on your industry, it's a safe bet that something's going right. North American railways have been in the spotlight for much of the last six months, especially since Warren Buffett invested heavily in Burlington Northern Santa Fe and declared his intention to up his stake in that railway and perhaps others too. The 62-billion-dollar man admitted to U.S. business media that the rail sector's weak performance over the last couple decades turned him off in the past.

But, he says, things are different now. He's not the



ON THE RIGHT TRACK: Rail is making a comeback, for sure. An evolution in overseas shipping bodes well for the mode's future.

only one. Billionaire investor Carl Icahn has also noticed rail's new luster and says he plans to make several acquisitions himself.

Rail is clearly enjoying a

renaissance. The four largest American railways, as well as CN Rail and CP Rail in this country, are rolling full steam ahead—unlike many trucking providers who've



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Supply Chain & Logistics Canada Annual Convention,

Toronto. Titled "Creating a Resilient Supply Chain" this three-day event will raise awareness of the challenges impacting Canada's global position and share strategies and tactics to significantly increase supply chain performance. Contact: 1-866/456-1231 or go to www.sclcanada.org.

May 21-23

2008 Purchasing Management Society of Canada Annual Conference,

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strategic supply management, the conference offers education, and training and development in the field of purchasing, logistics and supply management. Contact: 416/977-7111 or click on www.pmac.ca.

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Winnipeg Truck Show,

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June 1-4

Canadian Transportation Research Forum 2008 Annual Conference,

Crowne Plaza Lord Beaverbrook, Fredericton, N.B. Trucking companies, railways, port authorities, shippers, terminal operators, and government all make up the CTR Forum. This year's theme: Shaking up Canada's Transportation Systems to Meet Future Needs. Contact: 306/242-6199 or go to www.ctrf.ca.

pulled the covers over their heads until the current economic storm passes. (See Survivor Trucking on p. 38 for more on that).

BNSF posted an impressive \$1.83 billion in profit last year. CN said it made over \$2 billion, while the much smaller CPR says it's improving on last year's record of \$950 million.

With tight capacity and surging long-haul demand from international container importers and exporters—plus increasing highway and border congestion working against truckers—railways are experiencing pricing power that they haven't seen in decades. A recent shipper survey conducted by Bear Stearns indicated that 6.7 percent of surveyed shippers' volume switched from truck to rail in the fourth quarter of '07. That's down slightly from the 8.1 percent in the same period of 2006, but still on an upward trend in recent years.

The report also notes that 14 percent of shippers believe they can move up to 75 percent of their freight to the tracks. "[Fuel prices] could continue to drive the spread between total transportation costs wider," the report continued.

Ron Tepper, president of LTL and intermodal carrier Consolidated Fastfrate (CFF), is one of a few truckers who've profited heavily from rail growth—though, in turn, he points out that the trains are also making money in part because of service providers like him.

In February, Fastfrate and Canadian Pacific announced a new \$500-million agreement that

STILL TRUSTWORTHY?

A tandem of government regulations combined with general market softness has forced a few trucking income trusts to reshuffle their decks. And at least one—Canada's largest carrier—is even pondering a change to its corporate setup.

Contrans, Mullen and TransForce all blamed changes to federal tax rules for income trusts and Alberta's overhaul of its oil and gas royalty regime for less-than-satisfactory returns in 2007 and the first quarter of this year.

High fuel costs and the strong Canadian dollar exasperated the situation, and despite a generally buoyant western market, the carriers reported depressed overall year-to-year profits.

TransForce, for one, has bought more than 75 carriers over the last five years and although it isn't planning to put the brakes on fleet acquisitions, it says the income trust tax changes announced in 2006 could slow down the pace.

"There continues to be a significant opportunity for TransForce to play a leading role in the consolidation of the Canadian transportation industry, particularly in light of the current business and economic environment," says President and CEO Alain Bedard. "[But] the rules... may limit TransForce's ability to continue with its strategic objectives especially as it relates to the ability to

raise funds and thereby effect acquisitions."

As a result, TransForce's board has directed management "to investigate all alternatives... including possible conversion to a corporate structure."

Contrans hasn't indicated it too is pondering other options on that front, but the carrier did recently initiate a massive cost-saving restructuring plan. The firm consolidated its eastern Canadian van and flatbed operations together under a single management group, while all administrative functions for its east coast business units will be centralized at the General Freight Carriers facility in Saint John. "Like other companies, we have had to manage the effects of many changes in business conditions such as plant closures, the value of the Canadian dollar, escalating fuel prices and other economic pressures. We prefer meeting these challenges head on and in a proactive manner rather than standing by and hoping conditions will improve," says Stan Dunford, chairman and CEO.



Go to Todaystrucking.com and search 'income trust' for the complete stories.

extends their longstanding partnership for another decade. The exclusive deal dates back to 1966, when CFF became the only carrier in the country to have the strategic advantage of building all its cross-dock facilities on or adjacent to CP intermodal terminals. CP depends on the trucking company for seamless LTL service, freight consolidation, deconsolidation, warehousing and transshipping.

While there's still some issues with turnaround times at rail yards and winter weather service, Tepper says railways have gotten faster, for the most part. "Rail and supply chain were never really two words that went hand in hand," he says

in an interview. "Railways are slow and methodical. But they've become speedier. In a country that's 7,000 miles long and everything is 60 miles from the border, it's an easy way of transporting goods across the country.

"They're not building more tracks either. Once you have a capacity issue where you're full, it's not hard to drive [profit] into the direction you want. So, they're not going to grow their businesses by adding more tracks, but by adding more speed to existing infrastructure."

Tepper isn't worried about the future of trucking. Regardless of the market changes affecting various transport modes, trucks will always be essential in certain

long-haul and regional sectors. But there's no denying the boost that Asian and Indian trade markets will continue to give the rail sector in the long-term.

"Free trade has always been about Canada selling to the U.S. and very little the other way around. Now we have product that's wanted around the world, and they're willing to pay for it," he says. "Is NAFTA going to be as valuable to Canada as it once was? My own view is probably not. There's a growing recognition that, yes, America is our largest trading partner, but does it have to be our only trading partner now that we have some leverage with the products we're trading?"



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Livestock

Hog Wild Over Animal Transport

Hauled furniture is treated "with more respect" than animals transported in containers over long distances, cries out an international animal rights group.

In a global campaign launched last month, the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) says pigs and other farm animals are being "brutalized" by "cruel and unnecessary" transport methods.

"The suffering that these animals must go through is quite appalling," Melissa Tkachyk, programs officer with WSPA Canada told Canadian Press.

A yearlong investigation by the group, dubbed Handle With Care, aims to expose the harsh conditions animals are subjected to during their long journeys to slaughterhouses.

Canadian carriers, claims the group, are some of the worst culprits.

On one route, about 15,000 pigs are stuffed into containers each year, and then trucked from Lethbridge, Alta., to California before being shipped to Hawaii. According to the group, animals are exposed to extreme temperature changes, and are deprived of food, water and rest for long stretches of time. Many of the animals die before reaching their destination, the coalition says.

Laurie Loveman, a writer and animal rights activist, tells us that she would like to see more companies slaughtering closer to home

heard on the Street

■ The **MANITOBA TRUCKING ASSOCIATION'S** 28-member Board of Directors elected **Earl Coleman of Big Freight Systems** president for the 2008-2009 term.

During its 76th Annual General Meeting, the board also named **Brian Page** of Winnipeg Motors Express as first vice-president and **Susan Snyder** of Searcy Trucking as second vice-president, while **Clayton Gording** of Reimer Express Lines assumes the role of past-president.

■ **FREIGHTLINER TRUCKS** announced its 2007 ASPIRE Award winners, which included a handful of Canadian dealerships. The **ASPIRE** (Acknowledging Sales, Parts & service, Image and Relationship Excellence) program

and then shipping the meat "neatly packaged" in a truck, which is easier on both animals and truck drivers, she argues.

While her suggestions might be noble, that simply isn't the reality of the situation, says Tom Luckhart, owner of 26-truck livestock hauler Luckhart Transport in Sebringville, Ont.

Many regions don't have the capacity for mass slaughtering and in a country the size of Canada, long-haul livestock transport is a practical and economic necessity in order to keep meat fresh and affordable.

Furthermore, the number of livestock haulers that mistreat animals are few in this country, he argues. Certified animal transporters like him make the welfare of the animals of "paramount importance."

His fleet, he says, is equipped with various

comfort features like misting systems that spray animals down and provide access to fresh drinking water. On longer routes, animals are unloaded at certain points and allowed to roam, which allows the driver to clean the trucks and change the bedding.

"Common sense dictates that what is good for the animals is also good for business."

Employment

So long Open Road, Hello Housewares

For the first time in decades, more Canadian men would rather be sales clerks than truck drivers. According to Statistics Canada's 2006 census report on Canada's labor force, trucking is no longer the top employer in the country for Canadian males. Instead, 285,800 men said they were retail salespeople

recognizes the vision, dedication and persistence of Freightliner Trucks dealers. Freightliner of Cranbrook, Cranbrook, B.C.; Services De Mecanique Mobile B.L. Inc., of Granby, Que.; and Freightliner Manitoba, Winnipeg, were all were named Summit Award winners. Nova Enterprises of Truro, N.S. was the Canadian location recognized in the Alpine Award category.

■ **VOLKSWAGEN AG** took control of Swedish truck and bus maker **Scania** AB last week. The (US\$4.37 billion) deal could make VW a credible global competitor to rivals Daimler AG and AB Volvo. The agreement could also mean that a rumored alliance between Volkswagen and MAN AG's truck businesses could finally be in the cards.

A three-way merger between VW, Scania and MAN would make it Europe's largest truck maker. Such a merger could put a spin on MAN's ongoing partnership with International here in North America, possibly clearing the way for an even tighter alliance.

or clerks, overtaking truck driving as the most common occupation, which was reported by 276,200 men.

Retail jobs comprised one of the largest occupational groups in the country; their numbers rose by 132,300, the largest increase of all occupations. Cashiers increased by 43,300, a reflection of expanding consumer spending in retail stores. In terms of absolute numbers, the busy retail sector was joined by construction and health care industries as the fastest-growing occupations. Construction trades helpers and laborers rose by 52,300—much of the growth occurring in British Columbia and Alberta. The former province is building rapidly for the 2010 Olympic Games and is home to a sizzling real estate market.

In Alberta, the oil and gas industry is still relatively small compared to other



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truck sales index

January 2008

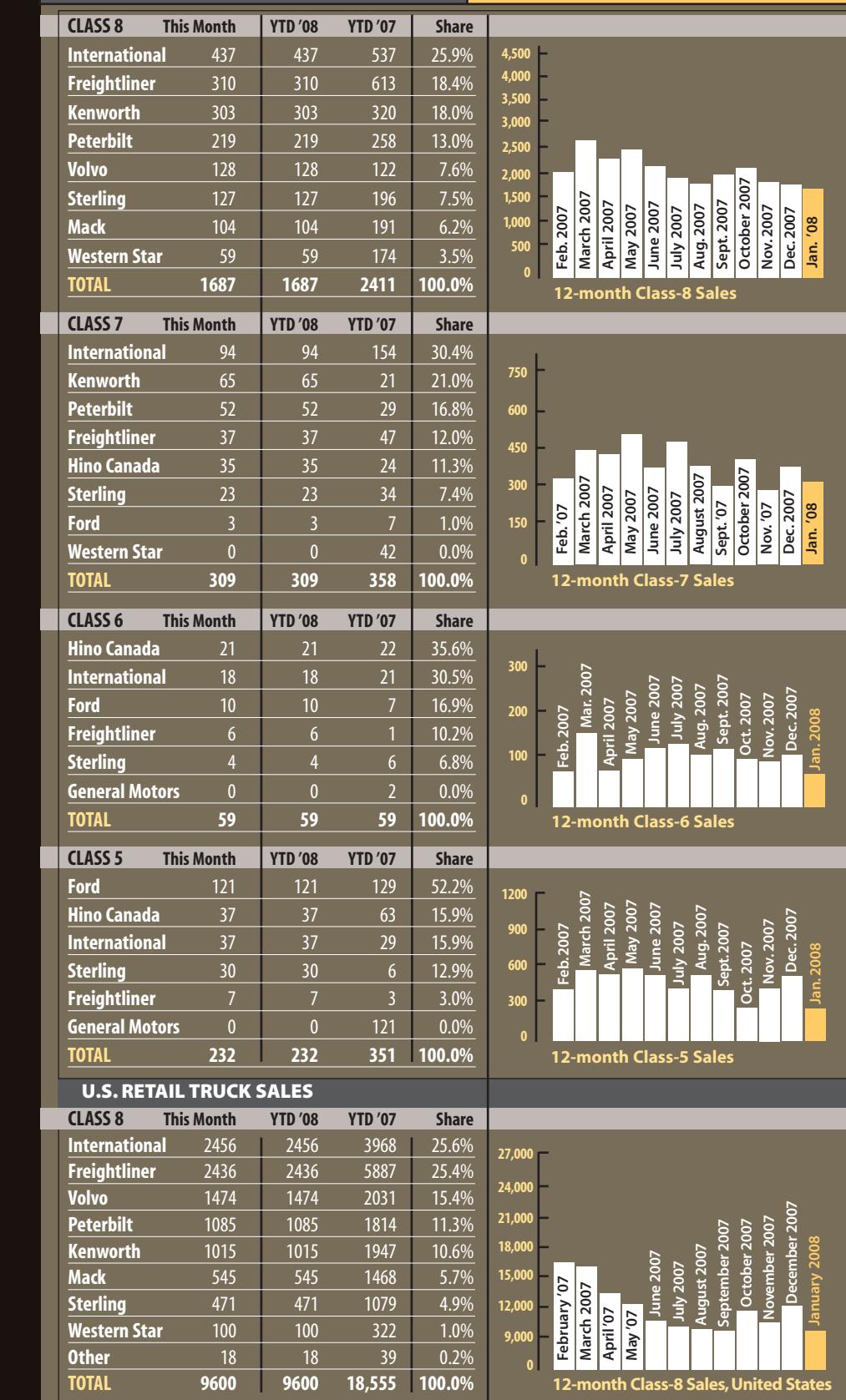
sectors, but its rapid expansion in recent years has meant huge gains for a number of occupations. The number of oil and gas well drillers, servicers, testers and related workers increased by 78 percent to 11,500—making it the fastest growing of all occupations. According to data on labor mobility,



VETERAN VORTEX: Trucking is not the top employer of Canadian males for the first time in recent memory. Get used to it.

563,000 people or 3.4 percent of the total workforce, moved to a different province or territory between 2001 and 2006. Not surprisingly, mobility rates to Alberta were highest.

There's more evidence that Canada's labor force is aging rapidly, a sign that doesn't bode well for the veteran-dependant trucking industry. In 2006, those aged 55 and older accounted for 15.3 percent of the total labor force, up from 11.7 percent in 2001. Plus, the median age of the labor force surpassed 40 years for the first time, rising from 39.5 years in 2001 to 41.2 years in 2006. ▲



Online Resources: For more truck sales stats, go to todaystrucking.com

Sources: Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers Association and Ward's Communication.

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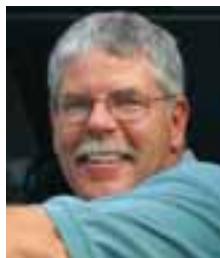
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The Hours Between Night and Day

driver's side *Two recent accident causation studies came to very different conclusions about time of day and accident risk. Maybe each was looking at different groups of drivers.* By Jim Park

Who are we to believe? Two studies by credible researchers coming to diametrically opposite conclusions. It reminds me of a line a from a Dire Straits song: "Two men say they're Jesus. One of them must be wrong." Our natural inclination would be to dismiss both of them, yet there's an outside chance that one of them could be the real McCoy. Who do we believe? More importantly, how would we verify either of their claims?

In early March, researchers at Virginia Tech's Transportation Institute published results of a study that concluded a greater risk for collision exists during the first hour of a trucker's shift. In November 2005, researchers at Penn State released results of a study that concluded the crash risk for truck drivers in the eleventh hour behind the wheel is more than three times higher than during the first hour.

Who's right?

My money is on Virginia Tech, they have the better football team. Virginia Tech's Hokies went 11 and three last year, while Penn State managed only a nine-and-four season. How can you take seriously a university that doesn't take its football seriously?

Well, that criteria is no better or no worse than any other judgment we could bring to the two crash correlation studies—without the benefit of personal experience.

If the Penn State study was to be believed, how would we explain our 13-hour driving day? We must be accidents looking for a place to happen.

But seriously, I really do think the Virginia Tech study has some merit. It claimed, for

haven't yet inhaled their quota of Starbucks' best. I think there is some correlation between sleep inertia and decision-making and precision driving.

What's really interesting is that the Virginia Tech study all but takes fatigue out of the



example, that there was a strong correlation between crash risk and time of day, and attributed that correlation to hour-by-hour traffic density variations.

In addition, Virginia Tech's researchers found a significant spike in the rate of critical incidents during the first driving-hour, concluding that exposure to heavy traffic conditions, and possibly sleep inertia and an increase in complex driving situations may be to blame for increases in crashes or near misses recorded in that time period.

It's probably safe to assume that the first hour of a driving shift takes place early in the morning. That's when drivers—like the rest of the world—are rushing to get somewhere and probably

equation as a causal factor. Surely, people fresh out of bed with eight to 10 hours of sleep under their belt can't be described as fatigued. Sleepy, maybe, but not tired to the point of being inattentive.

I couldn't say how many times over the years I've left home on a Sunday afternoon after a weekend off—with a full slate of hours in the logbook—but couldn't get two hours from the house without stopping for a nap. There were times I was moments away from dropping off to sleep. I always yanked it over for an hour's nap.

Had I wrecked, would it have been deemed a fatigue-related crash? It should have been, but how could they prove it?

There's currently no

method of quantifying fatigue—in the way we measure, say, blood alcohol content. Accident investigators rely on personal assessments in determining if fatigue was a factor at the time of a crash. They also rely on logbooks. Interestingly, if the driver for some reason is outside the legal limits on hours of service, he is automatically deemed to be fatigued, or, if the logbook isn't up to date, they come to the same conclusion. An hours-of-service violation means it was a fatigue related incident.

From personal experience, I'm most certain that driving hours recorded in a logbook do not accurately reflect a driver's level of "tiredness"—within reason.

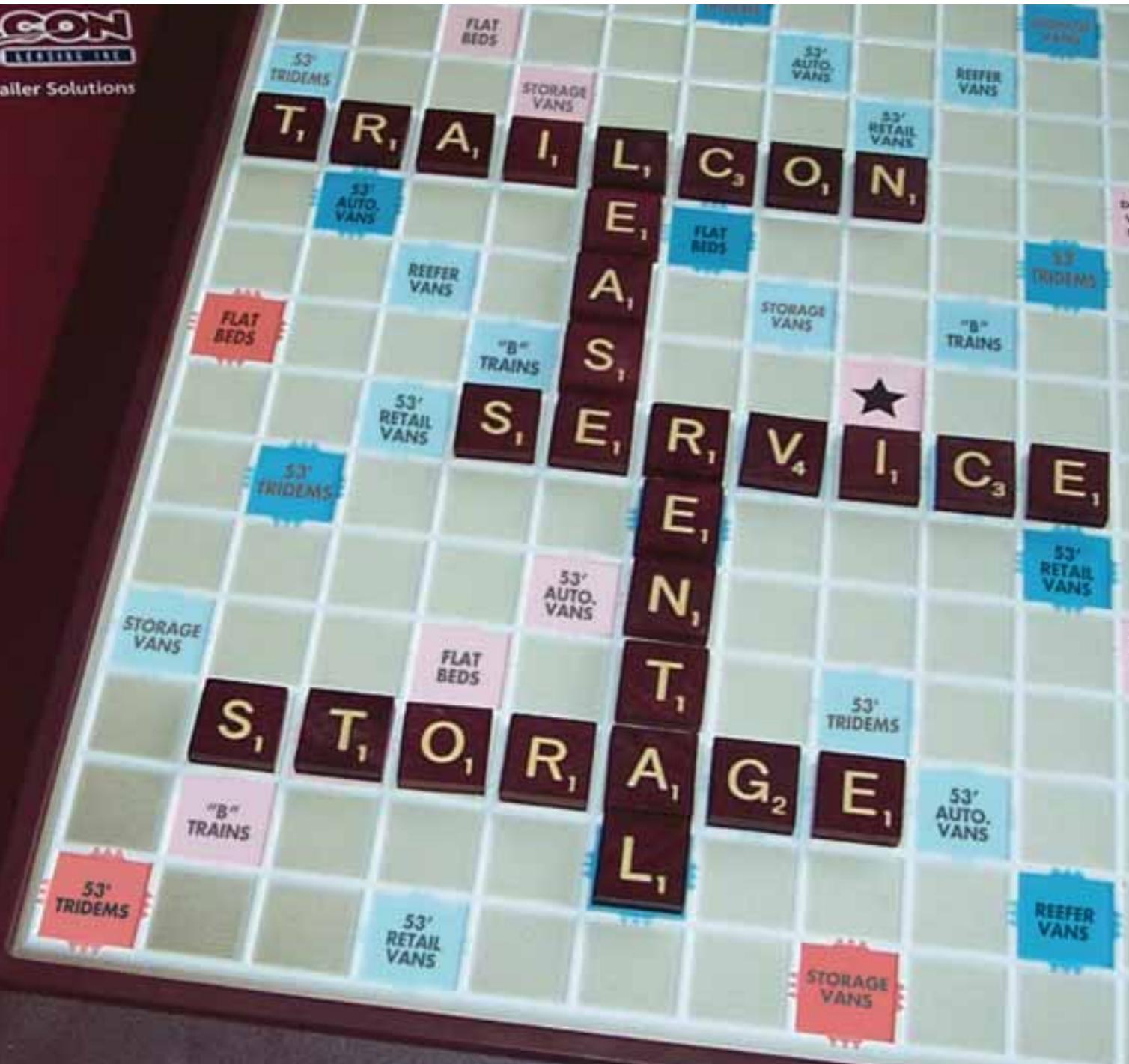
I'm a night owl, and have been for as long as I can remember—it's 2:45 a.m. as I write this. I'm not much use to anyone before 9:00 or 10:00 in the morning, as my colleagues will attest, and by 4:30 or so, I'm ready for a nap. If you think about it, there's nothing wrong with my body clock, it's just about three hours out of sync with the world around me.

It's too bad HOS doesn't allow for some driver discretion in delivery planning. I'd bet we'd see fewer accidents if drivers had a say in when they were expected to perform. ▲

A former owner-operator, Jim Park is the editor of *highwaySTAR* magazine. Reach him at 416/614-5811 or jim@todaystrucking.com.



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Mamas Don't Let Your Cowboys Grow Up To Be Drivers

drivers *Finding the perfect driver personality.* By Peter Carter

Everybody in this business knows what you're talking about when you call a driver a cowboy.

It has nothing to do with what kind of hat or buckle a guy wears.

Cowboy equals attitude.

A cowboy driver has a lead foot, a tendency to ignore the rules and the corporate loyalty of a mosquito.

Dangle a penny-a-mile increase in front of this guy and he's off to another carrier.

Conversely, cowboys have traits that make them ideal drivers.

They're mechanically deft, they don't mind being alone and cowboys are very articulate when they choose to be.

Current market conditions and fuel-prices aside, the single biggest labor issue facing trucking is the good-driver shortage. And given that recent estimates suggest that replacing a full time driver can cost anywhere between \$50 and \$100,000, finding the right drivers to fill your seats is an art form; one that can be costly if it goes wrong. That figure, according to industry experts, doesn't include the cost of accidents or injuries that might follow a bad hire.

So how do you tell during a hiring process what kind of person you're getting?

Today's Trucking approached vpi Inc., a human-resources consulting company that for more than 20 years has helped transportation companies solve staffing problems. The questions: What's the ideal driver personality and how do you know he or she has it before the contract is signed.

Laura Smillie, director of operations for vpi says having the right personality—or as she calls it "fit"—is as important as the right skill set. Skill can be taught.

"We've found that although large corporations make hiring decisions based largely on technical competency, those same corporations indicated that 85 percent of terminations were a result of behavioral incompatibility; in other words, a "fit."

Whatever you call it, we wanted vpi to help us put some parameters on it.

vpi, according to Smillie, carves an analysis of the typical driving job, with input from owners, managers and drivers. They interviewed and submitted to personality tests a handful of top-performing and loyal drivers and did the same to some industry-leading managers and owners.

"This research," says Smillie, "assisted in developing a short-list of personal attributes to look for when hiring drivers."

Long story short, here, according to Smillie's research, is what you're looking for:

- Satisfaction with driving long distances
- Keenness and alertness
- Reliable, punctual, and patient
- Customer service awareness
- Good judgment and problem-solving
- Obey rules, regulations, procedures and company policies
- A self-starter, competitive, enthusiastic and self-confident
- Ability to react in emergencies
- Deliberate and careful
- Takes calculated risks
- Mechanical ability
- Follows tasks through to completion
- Ability to learn how to operate on-board computer devices

■ Good literacy of English (for reading text and document use)

The hard part, says Smillie, is learning during the job-interview process whether your candidates meet all the above criteria. (See FYI FROM VPI).

As Kevin Snobel, the general manager of Mississauga-based Caravan Logistics put it, "just because they can talk a good game during the interview doesn't mean they can deliver."

He asks drivers how they approached problems in the past and says as much depends on how they answer as the words they use. "Do they interrupt you? Do they boast?"

If so, do you really want somebody like that? Snobel says a distinguishing feature of a good driver is that when he discusses problems, he refers to the impact his decisions have on other people around him; and not just himself. "I want to hear how he thinks he impacts the company."

Bill Friesen is the manager of Driver Services at Winnipeg-based Arnold Bros. He says that a thorough examination of all records, driving history and CVORs makes the personality assessment



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easier. "In some ways, it's harder than it used to be to hire a guy; but in other ways," he says, "It's easier. There's so much paperwork by the time you're through it you have a pretty good picture of the man or woman."

Friesen believes in the give-a-man-enough-rope school of interviewing and says the more you let a person talk, the more liable they are to fess up to some-

thing. "You'd be surprised what you hear, once a person starts going on."

A man who knows a thing or two about driver "fit" is Dan Shea. He's VP of Human Resources for UPS Canada. Among the keys to UPS's retention success? Hire from within. That way you're getting a known quantity.

UPS of course has a scripted battery of interviews and tests and the hiring deci-

sions are pretty objective, says Shea, so there's not a lot of guess work involved. "There are no tricks or hooks in it."

Smillie says she thinks if a company wants to replicate that kind of system, they can outsource all aspects of hiring, retention and indeed, when things go really wrong, firing, to people like herself.

"And," adds Smillie, "the first consultation's free." ▲

FYI FROM VPI

To get a true picture of a potential hire quickly, objective assessments work better than simple interviews.

About 70 percent of the Top 500 companies in Canada use some type of testing during recruitment. Most assessments take less than 20 minutes and cost less than \$100 to administer. Compare this to the cost of one bad hire and you'll see it makes good business sense.

You can either conduct your own testing or hire professionals. (Click on www.vpi-inc.com).

Tests should measure the person-organizational fit, the skills required to perform the tasks of the job and finally, should be used as

part of the hiring process, rather than in isolation. Also, a structured interview should be conducted and penetrating questions asked in order to establish the candidates' successes and limitations of past work, as well as to assess existing work traits.

Recruiters should develop targeted behavioural questions probing each of the core personal and work attributes outlined in the list above. As an example:

ATTRIBUTE SOUGHT: Obey rules and company policies.

SUGGESTED QUESTION: Tell me about a time where it was imperative that you rely on precedent and policy in order to achieve positive results and ensure client satisfaction?

Behavioural-based questions coupled with pre-selection assessments can prove to be reliable predictors of job performance and assist you to ensure that the right hires are made and kept.

The time has come to change our hiring strategy to begin to hire on the basis of fit. Until we do, we'll continue to be crippled by a mediocre, unstable and ever-churning workforce. With a 120-percent turnover rate, we can't afford to wait.

— Laura Smillie





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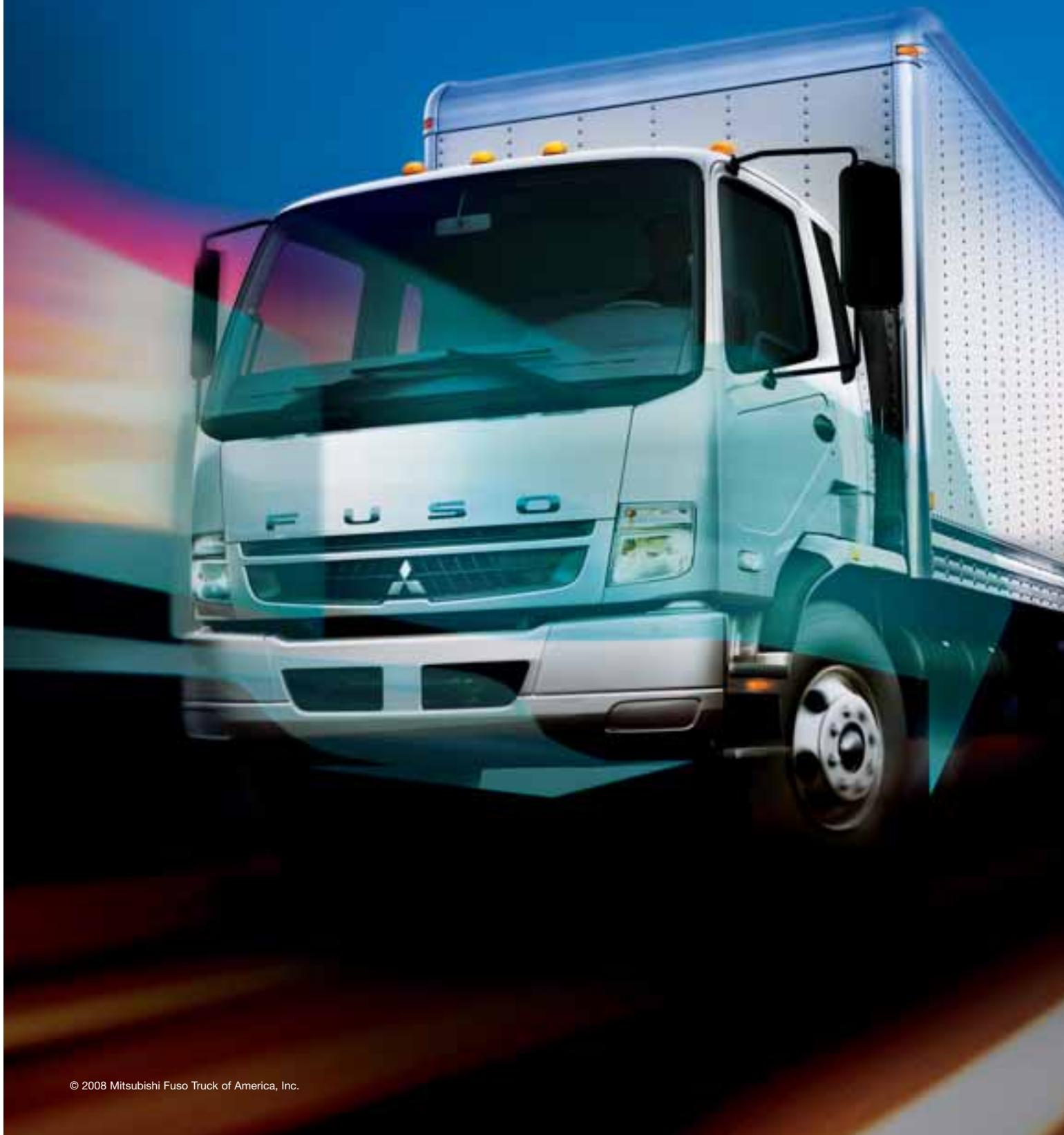
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Apnea Never Sleeps

safety Are you doing enough to battle this trucking hazard?

By Brian Botham

A year has come and gone since our new hours-of-service regulations became law in Canada. (For most of Canada anyway.)

While I have not seen any Canadian research yet, the latest study out of the U.S. (www.atri-online.org) shows a decrease in fatigue-related collisions since they changed their regulations.

This of course is great news and I would expect to see the same type of data here in Canada in the next year or so.

One of the biggest changes we saw with the new HOS regulations was the mandatory eight consecutive hours off duty or sleeper berth. This part of the regulation was designed to ensure drivers received proper sleep or rest, to allow their bodies to reset or refresh. One of the advantages of this part of the regulation is it helps to reduce sleep apnea.

Sleep apnea is a condition in which a narrowing or closure of the upper airway during sleep causes repeated sleep disturbances, and possible complete awakenings, leading to poor sleep quality and excessive daytime sleepiness.

The two factors that are most prevalent in people suffering from sleep apnea are obesity and age. It's most common among people in their late 40s and 50s. Another factor that should be taken into consideration is length of sleep time. Short

sleep duration, six hours or less per night, results in an increase in the prevalence of sleep apnea.

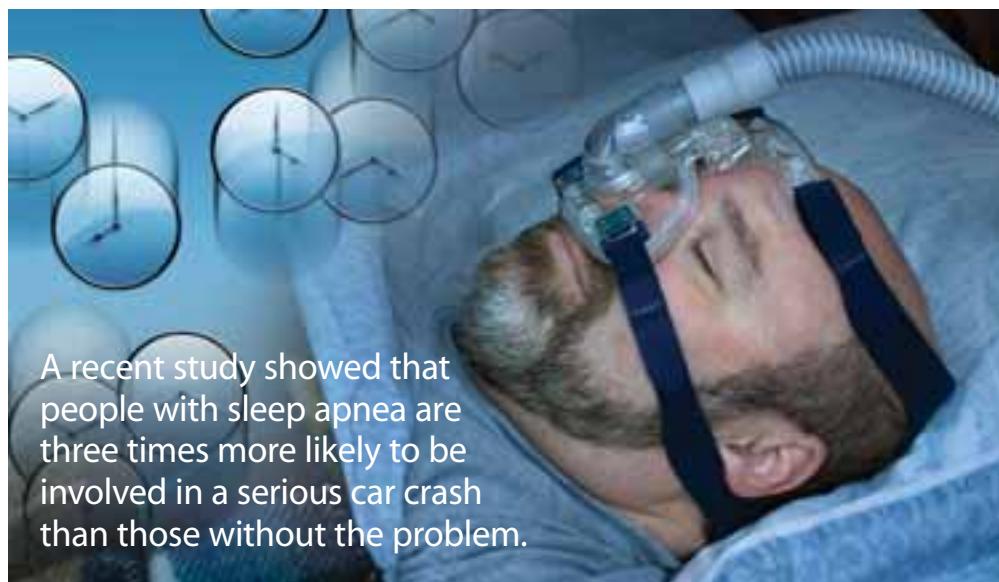
Take all of these indicators into account and it would not surprise me to find that there are a great number of our drivers suffering from sleep apnea.

find them behind the wheel.

Unfortunately the study that was conducted did not differentiate between drivers of commercial vehicles vs. those in personal vehicles. But that doesn't matter. If you employ drivers, you should know about sleep apnea.

Of course even if the treatment is successful, and driving privileges are reinstated, the driver will continue to be monitored.

One of the most important things you can do is to make your drivers aware of this sleep apnea. Tear out this article and



A recent study showed that people with sleep apnea are three times more likely to be involved in a serious car crash than those without the problem.

A recent study from the Vancouver Coastal Research Institute and the University of British Columbia found that people with sleep apnea are three times more likely to be involved in a serious car crash than those without the problem. Not only were there more crashes, the crashes that did occur were more severe resulting in greater injuries.

One of the dangers of sleep apnea is increased daytime drowsiness. Because a person who suffers from sleep apnea does not get proper rest, they are more prone to falling asleep during daytime hours; typically that's when we would

Here's what section 6.4.2 of the code states: Patients with severe sleep apnea or other syndromes that chronically interfere with sleep are at increased risk of an accident or injury while driving because of daytime sleepiness. Patients with a history of pathologic daytime sleepiness should be referred to a consultant for further assessment. If their condition is severe enough to impair driving ability, they should not be allowed to drive any class of motor vehicle until the condition has been adequately treated and controlled. (CMA 6.3).

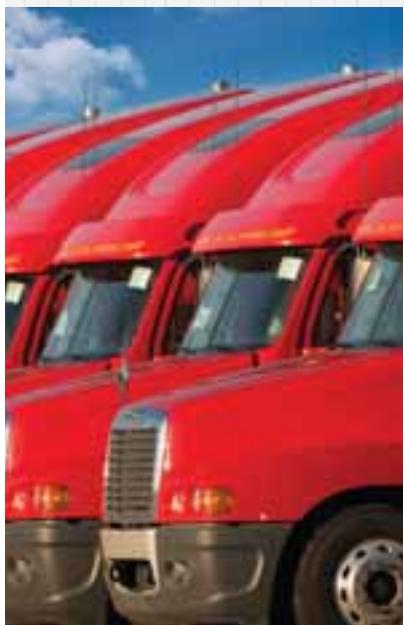
post it in your driver's room.

Let them know that treatment is available and that you can help to point them in the right direction so they can be treated and begin recovery.

I am sure you will agree that you would rather have a driver off on sick leave or disability for a time period rather than have that driver involved in a sleep apnea related collision that could result in death or serious injury. ▲

Brian Botham, CDS, is a Certified Director of Safety through NATMI. He can be reached at 519-533-3656 or bbotham@cmvsafety.ca.

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IT'S TRUCK WORLD TIME

TRUCK WORLD 2008. It's just around the corner and you'll get a look down the road. **BY TODAY'S TRUCKING STAFF**

Newcom Business Media, which publishes this magazine, also owns the Canadian industry's largest professional trade show, namely, Truck World. And the next version of that show is scheduled for later this month, April 17, 18 and 19 at the International Centre in Mississauga.

There's every reason you should make an effort to attend. Organizers and anyone who has attended a past Truck World will assure you that it's not only educational and entertaining, Truck World can have an easily recognizable ROI. You'll meet old contacts, make new ones, and walk away with a leg up on the competition.

Plus, there's location location and location. As Newcom's Show Manager Elizabeth McCullough says, the International Centre is in the very heart of logistics land. "There's no excuse not to show up. You might even want to schedule some runs that way so that your drivers get the chance to drop in."

In fact, she says, it's a chance for you to hand out a nice little perk.

"The show's just down the road from the Purolator and FedEx hubs. Across the street from Pearson and near all the intermodal yards in Mississauga," says McCullough. "This area is positively truck central. There's tons of free parking."

Says McCullough: "If you want a free pass, just check out the online show guide, get in touch with one of the exhibitors and tell them you'd like to attend. They'd love to hear from you."

The show's huge and there's lots of reasons to attend.

With more than 400 exhibitors strutting their gear and services



in the five halls that comprise about 350,000 sq ft of exhibit space, you'll be lucky to cover the whole event in three days. This is especially true if you try to take in the long list of added attractions, all designed to enhance your core business.

The show gives you a chance to meet the people behind the scenes and literally get a feel for the gear they're selling, McCullough says.

Furthermore, she says, a big part of any professional or trade show is the connecting that goes on in the lounges, hallways and hospitality suites. She says that the continued growth of all types of trade shows is proof that face-to-face is still the best way to do business, and trade shows provide the best locale for that kind of interaction.

For more information and to see the list of exhibitors, log on to www.truckworld.ca.

SEMINARS

Truck World will be presenting several seminars this year. Here's the schedule:

THURSDAY, APRIL 17

ONTARIO APPRENTICESHIP: INFORMATION FOR CARRIERS

This seminar will help fleet owners, managers, recruiters, and HR specialists understand the advantages of participating in Ontario's new Truck Driver Apprenticeship program.

LOCATION: 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in Aviation Ballroom B



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FRIDAY, APRIL 18

WHY SUPPORT WOMEN IN TRUCKING?

Ellen Voie, Executive Director of the Women in Trucking Association, will tell you why. Voie discusses the issues involved in making women aware of the career opportunities in trucking and how to reduce obstacles they might encounter in joining the industry. This one is for fleet owners and managers, recruiters, and HR staff.

LOCATION: 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in Aviation Ballroom B

SATURDAY, APRIL 19

ONTARIO APPRENTICESHIP: INFORMATION FOR TRUCK DRIVERS

Truck owners, new drivers and non-drivers who wish they were will learn the benefits and advantages in participating in Ontario's new Truck Driver Apprenticeship Program.

LOCATION: 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. in Aviation Ballroom B

HighwaySTAR Magazine Editor Jim Park presents two seminars on Saturday, April 19, for owner-operators and drivers thinking of taking the next step.

ADMISSION IS FREE, compliments of Shell Canada Products. Pre-registration is recommended.

SPEC'ING AND DRIVING FOR FUEL ECONOMY

This seminar offers tips on driving today's speed-sensitive engines along with spec'ing information to make sure your truck is as efficient as it can be.

LOCATION: 11:00 a.m. to noon in Aviation Ballroom B

TEN THINGS SUCCESSFUL OWNER-OPERATORS DO

You'll leave this session with 10 things you can do right away to make your trucking business more profitable.

LOCATION: 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in Aviation Ballroom B

SelecTrucks Classic Truck Showcase

Come see some of these ageless beauties and meet the truck aficionados who keep them in such fine condition. Truck World 2008 will feature eight of the best, from 1940 to 1975.

SHOW TIMES, FOLKS

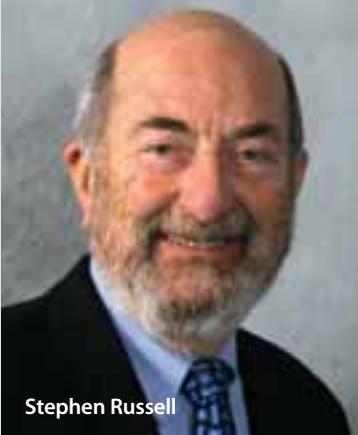
Kick off your visit with the Truck World 2008 VIP Breakfast, featuring keynote speaker **Stephen Russell**, chairman and CEO of the Celadon Group Inc. Celadon is ranked as one of North America's largest truckload carriers with annual revenue nearing \$500 million. Celadon is believed to be the largest provider of international truckload movements in North America. As chair of the American Trucking Associations' Homeland Security Policy Committee, Russell is bound to have some interesting insights into our thickening borders. Admission is \$50 (plus GST) per person.

The VIP breakfast is sponsored by Shaw Tracking. **Thursday, April 17, 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. in Aviation Ballroom AB.**

New to Truck World this year is the **Survival Strategies Fleet Forum**. Moderated by Newcom's Editorial Director, **Rolf Lockwood**, this forum is for owners and managers of 25- to 100-truck fleets. Admission is free, compliments of Shell Canada Products. Pre-registration recommended.

THE PANELISTS: **Itamar Levine**, Bison Transport's director of maintenance speaks to the growing technological challenges facing small fleets today. **Chris Willard** of HBC Logistics, addresses mounting compliance issues. **Gord Peddle**, President of D.D. Transport in Newfoundland talks about the problem of attracting and retaining drivers.

Friday, April 18, 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. in Aviation Ballroom.



Stephen Russell

The highwaySTAR of the Year Award presentation

Each year, *highwaySTAR* magazine in conjunction with a host of partners chooses an outstanding driver and presents that person with more than \$10,000 in prizes plus the honor of being named *highwaySTAR* of the Year. "This is often the highlight of a driver's career," says Show Manager McCullough. "It's always a very moving ceremony."

LOCATION: Saturday, April 19, at the Freightliner booth (5401) at 12:30 p.m.

Hat Day

McCullough also reminds everybody that Saturday is Hat Day. Be one of the first 4,000 visitors through the door and get a free hat, courtesy of Detroit Diesel and Freightliner.

Other Highlights?

McCullough says anybody with an interest in the future of trucking will enjoy the engine-building demonstration put on by the students and faculty of Centennial College, in Hall 4.

Also, every Truck World visitor will be handed ballots for the draws. This year, there's more than \$50,000 in prizes

being handed out, including a 100-Year Anniversary Harley Davidson Model FLSTS "Heritage Softail spring" from Mack Canada; a \$1,500 gift certificate for diesel fuel from Ultramar; and an LCD flat screen television from PeopleNet.

Finally, you won't regret stopping in and talking trucks with artist/historian Lance Lowther. He's the painter whose detailed and lively truck illustrations hang in so many boardrooms across the country; and he's always got an interesting tale to share. Lowther'll be in Hall 3a. ▲

FOR MORE INFO

Click! You're In!

AVOID THE LINEUP BY REGISTERING ONLINE AT TRUCKWORLD.CA

Do it today and get a three-day show pass for only \$10.00 (including GST). If you register after April 1, you can pick up your badge at the show. Tickets are \$20.00 at the door - cash only, please. Pre-registration closes at 4:00 p.m. on Apr. 15. Children 15 and under are FREE and do not need to be registered.

State of the Biz

BY MARCO BEGHETTO

Afew predictions: It's going to be a nice summer, weather-wise, but more than a handful of general freight carriers in your neck of the woods will be going bankrupt.

If you have a rep for buying up other fleets, your phone will be ringing off the hook, if that hasn't started already.

And if you're the sort of carrier that relies heavily on hiring an owner-op-based driving force, you're probably not going to allow your HR manager to book too much vacation time after Victoria Day.

As oil hit record highs of \$110 per barrel in mid-March and at-the-pump diesel costs subsequently soared, more than a few reports hit the street of trucking companies and lease operators hanging up their keys. Sure, that happens every time fuel spikes, but there's something different in the air this time.

Maybe it's the projections that gas and diesel could approach \$1.50 a liter during the summer peak season—news that can easily break the spirits of a trucker who's forking over nearly \$1,000 bucks to fill up today.

Or perhaps it's that carriers still haven't been able to compensate on their ORs for an American buck that's worth about 15 cents less than it was at this time last year. Plus, there's a real possibility the battered U.S. economy hasn't even bottomed out yet.

Even right now, many of these carriers are clawing and scratching at the hull of other sectors in a last-ditch effort to not fall overboard. While small carriers are more often accused of chasing freight, the current market conditions aren't size-sensitive as much as they're sector specific, says Rick Way of 28-truck Wayfreight Services in Guelph, Ont.

In his part of Southern Ontario, he says it's mostly the bigger auto parts haulers that are scrambling for loads in unfamiliar lanes. "Any time there's a carrier with huge capacity poking around, it's going to have some impact. They're the first ones to buckle because they have such huge capital invest-

ment and they have to keep trucks moving," says Way, who adds that despite the issues, he's still managed to get some modest increases from his niche customers.

Western Canada is far enough removed from the auto ripple effect, but the region's got its own issues. A surging energy sector in Alberta and northern Saskatchewan is keeping domestic trucking robust for the most part, but other export-dependant segments like logging and pulp and paper are in pretty bad shape.

"Those [sectors] traditionally generate heavy volumes," says Clayton Gording of Winnipeg LTL carrier, Reimer Express. "When those [loads] diminish those carriers move into other markets, and that affects everybody. We're feeling the impact of that."

As for the supply-side effect on rates, "it hasn't been this bad in all the years I've been pricing," says David Sirgey of the Freight Carriers Association of Canada, a group that determines fair market rates and fuel surcharges for fleets.

If truckers aren't charging enough for accessorial services and fuel surcharges, they simply won't be around much longer. And that's just to make them whole again.

With the cost of fuel and the exchange rate easily pushing many carriers five points above the 100 OR threshold, where's the profit even after semi-successfully recouping of fuel, border, and wait-time costs?

Unfortunately too many carriers would rather try weathering the storm than sending their sales people to find out—fearing they'll get talked into discounts, which is a far cry from negotiating an increase.

Shippers, many of which have their own problems to deal with these days, are holding on tight to their buying leverage. Managers who are normally focused on other departments are coming out of the woodwork looking for ways to cut costs—and transportation is one of the first targets.

"There's huge pressure for businesses to reduce costs—especially in the U.S.—and if they can drive some of that cost out of their freight, they'll certainly do it. And the timing is bad because there's excess capacity in many markets. So for carriers it's a double whammy because they're getting it from competitors who will do anything to get [the freight] and the manufacturer which is most anxious to drive down cost," says Gording.

The challenge for the hot summer of 2008: Will you tough it out or sell it out?

SURV

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In its most recent Quarterly Shippers Survey of 200 companies, N.Y.-based transportation market analysts for Bear Stearns reported that three out of four shippers are taking advantage of overcapacity in the truckload and LTL markets.

"Anecdotally, we believe shippers' Requests for Proposals [RFPs] in the market during early 2008 will look similar in scope to the record number of RFPs conducted in first-quarter of 2007, as we believe shippers continue to try to take advantage of the soft environment to lock in flat to down rates in both TL and LTL," wrote the report's author Ed Wolfe. "We also heard of several large shippers seeking to lock in two-year TL and LTL contracts rather than the typical one-year contract."

That's typically true, confirms Gording. Not all shippers are pulling down rates, as



IVOR: UCKING

many would rather accept flattish or even modest increases on lanes where they can keep respected existing carriers in business. The flip side is that service providers will be expected to hold the price when volumes pick up later in the fall peak season and in early '09. In some agreements, shippers have been getting away with negotiating lower surcharge schedules or capping their existing surcharges.

Although surcharges are now accepted as a permanent fixture to transport life, Bob Ballantyne says many shippers are suspicious of them.

"In some cases the carriers are double-dipping," says the president of the Canadian Industrial Transportation Association, an Ottawa-based shipper group. "They may be looking at base-rate increases which have an element of fuel costs built

in, and then they bring in a fuel surcharge on top of that. There is certainly uneasiness among shippers about that. So the question is how to we reconcile volatile fuel prices in a way that's fair for carriers and shippers?"

Agreeing to long-term surcharge limits in return for steady work may seem appetizing now that your competitors are working for nothing or being forced to give back freight. But it could come back to bite you if fuel's going to shoot up to levels the talking heads on Wall Street are predicting.

David Sirgey—whose firm at press time was recommending fuel surcharges of 14.4 percent for LTL, 30 percent for TL and 40 percent for heavy-haul—generally advises against contracts with a fixed price for an extended period of time. Still, he understands the pressures carriers are under

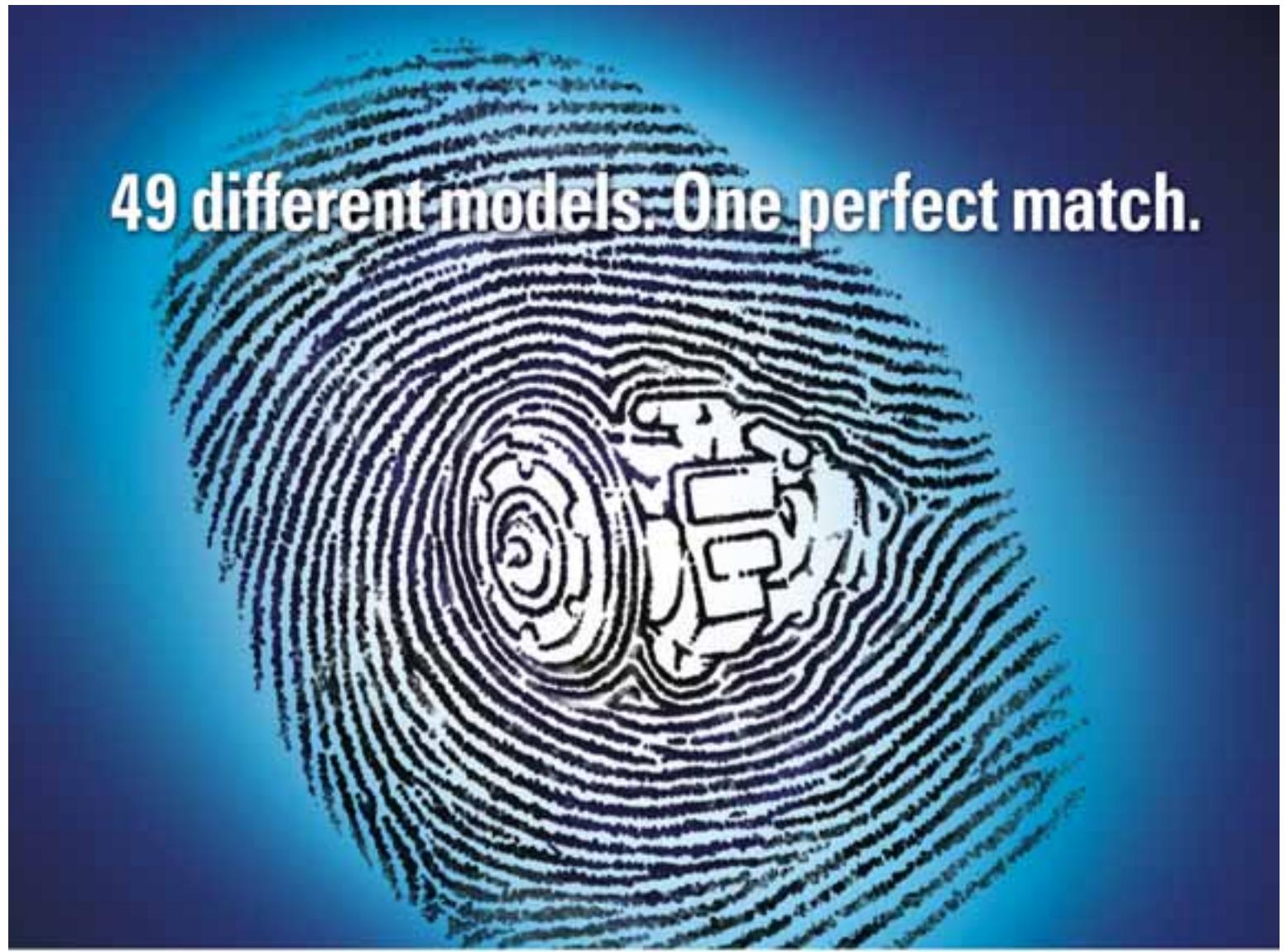
today, and says for the most part, carriers are more adept than they were a decade ago.

"Years ago, much of the industry would go into a pricing war, raise their OR to 102 and try to weather the storm," he says. "That is still occurring, but at least now more carriers are choosing to park their trucks. Truckers are getting smarter."

Rick Way agrees things could be worse. Bankruptcies and closures and a downturn in the truck-buying cycle have actually kept capacity tighter than what it could otherwise be right now.

"The market has shrunk to the extent where equipment is sitting now. The driver shortage has eased up allowing some firms to, shall we say, 'cull some deadwood.' Some of those things aren't all that bad."

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EATON

EATON

BY ROLF LOCKWOOD

Hauling freight from a base in middle Canada has rarely been tougher than it is in 2008. No secret there. Tougher still if you're a cross-border player. So how do you survive?

Challenger Motor Freight Chairman and CEO Dan Einwechter doesn't have a magic wand to make everything right again. But after more than 30 years in the game he's got an idea or two, and they seem to be working.

"The key is to constantly question every action, every decision, and decide whether it's the right one or whether it needs re-inventing," he says. "And that means the markets we serve, whether geographically or in terms of customers, the types of equipment in the fleet, and the methods we use to deliver on our customer promise."

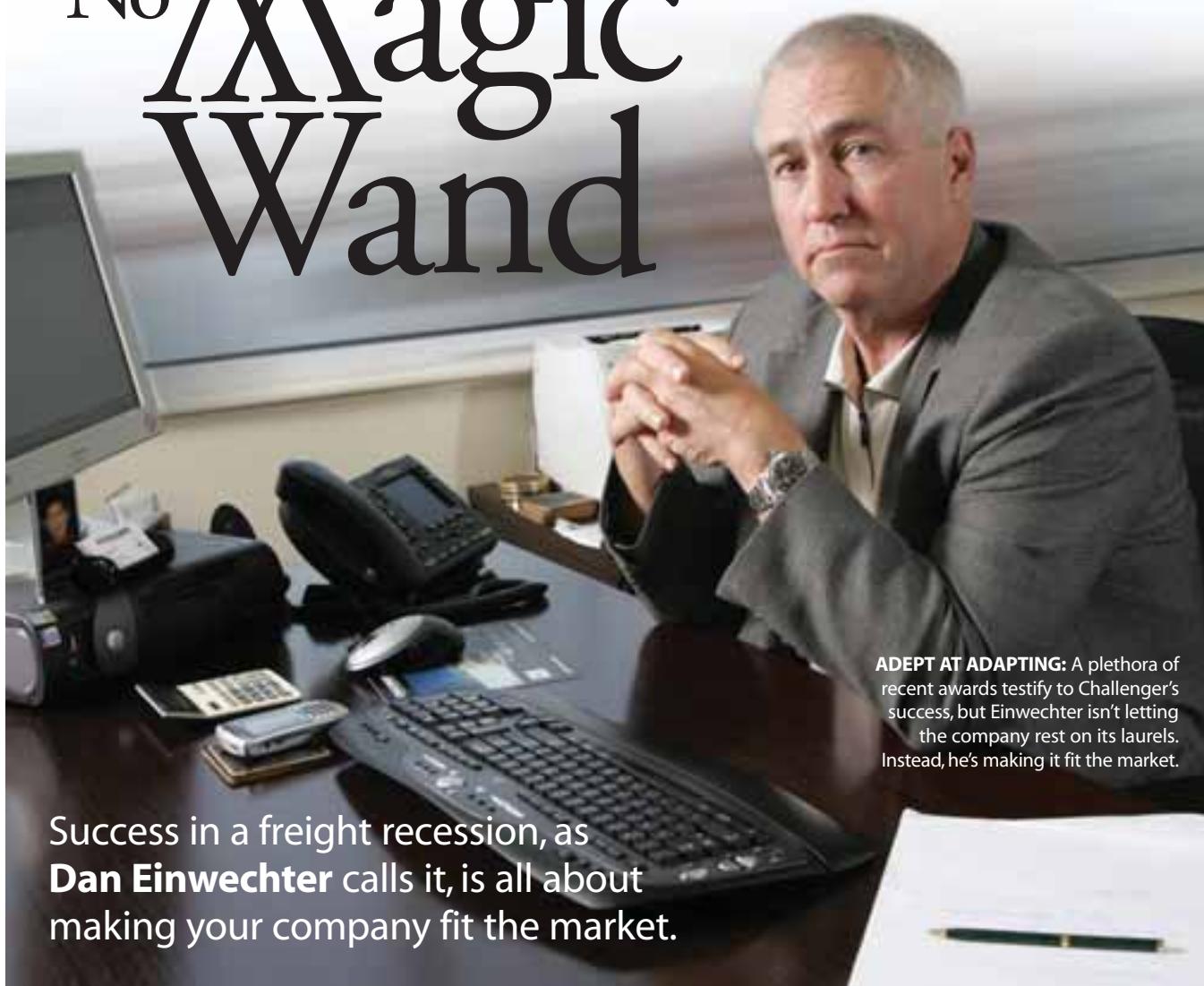
Now running some 1,500 tractors and about 3,500 trailers—up from one of each in 1975—from a base in Cambridge, Ont., Einwechter says that he's not really in the trucking game any more. And therein lies another key to survival. It's a way of thinking.

"I used to say I was in the trucking business when I first started. But nowadays I'm in the customer-service business," he says, "and I happen to use trucks to meet a portion of my clients' needs. That attitude has allowed us to deal with the adversity of the marketplace because we can go to a client and be a one-stop service provider.

"We've expanded dramatically on intermodal activity, for instance," Einwechter adds. "If it makes sense from a customer's perspective, we offer that as a solution."

With a full-bore logistics division, complemented by warehousing services and some 650,000 sq ft of warehouse space, Challenger has also become adept at air and sea freight forwarding and third-party freight management. That's in addition to the truckload, LTL, and specialized trucking operations that have

No Magic Wand



ADEPT AT ADAPTING: A plethora of recent awards testify to Challenger's success, but Einwechter isn't letting the company rest on its laurels. Instead, he's making it fit the market.

Success in a freight recession, as **Dan Einwechter** calls it, is all about making your company fit the market.

Profile

been the company's stock in trade for many years. There's even a thriving used-truck sales business that sends well-maintained company trucks to customers all around the world.

"For some customers we do intermodal, we do warehousing, we do over-the-road, and we even load and ship boxcars," Einwechter says.

"Our clients want a choice. What we can do is offer them the services that they need when they need them."

AUTO PARTS DOWN:

Challenger reduced the number of auto-parts trucks by 130.



By all accounts it's been a successful approach because Challenger has been winning a lot of awards lately, including the rare achievement of Platinum status in the Canada's 50 Best Managed Companies competition.

That's no small feat. It means Challenger qualified as one of the country's 50 best for the seventh consecutive year. Run by *The Financial Post* in concert with CIBC, Deloitte & Touche, and Queen's University School of Business, the award is based on a rigorous and independent review that evaluates management skills and practices.

Einwechter has come a very long way to get there. He launched the company way back in 1975 as a one-truck operation while he was still in university, and it had grown to 100 power units by 1987 when it was profiled in the very first issue of this magazine. Cited then as an up-and-comer, with the ink on its all-Ontario operating authority only barely dry, Challenger now sits in the fifth spot on the *Today's Trucking* Top 100 list.

Other achievements of late include winning, for the second consecutive year, the prestigious Johnnie Walker Blue Award, given by Diageo, the world's largest distiller and distributor of spirits. It's presented to

the overall carrier of the year, based on four key performance metrics: on-time pickup, on-time delivery, load tender acceptance percentage, and EDI compliance.

And then there's the just-announced General Motors award for Best FAST Carrier Performance in 2007. Out of 18,288 shipments last year, Challenger managed to get just over 98 percent of them through the FAST lane.

Automotive freight has long been a Challenger mainstay, and it remains so,

trailers, sometimes in intermodal boxes. It makes sense for us to balance our trucks that way."

He acknowledges that the business environment is a lot less than rosy these days, and, like other carriers, he's had to adjust to a changing market, with more than a few plant closings suffered by his customers.

"Over a 24-month period up to last year we had to replace \$60 million worth of business due to either plant closings or shifting markets," Einwechter says, "and we did it." He attributes that to the depth of talent he has on staff, and to a good deal of hard work, of course.

"We're in a freight recession," he says flatly. "So we're planning as if all of 2008 will be a crappy year, even though some of the forecasts we've seen suggest that by July or August it should be pretty decent from a carrier perspective."

"We haven't had any layoffs at all in any area of the company—and none are planned—and in fact we're currently running ads for qualified load planners, dispatchers, and team drivers in Ontario, Quebec, and B.C. That's the beauty of being a provider of such varied services. We can simply allocate the resources to where they're needed," Einwechter says.

Size and success, however, also bring on a different sort of challenge: the ever-present rumor mill. In Challenger's case, that mill has been running on overtime lately, concocting tales of bankruptcy, mass layoffs of owner-operators, even the purchase of 52 percent of the company by Swift Transportation. None of them are true.

"I've been sold to the Americans over the years, now to the Germans, and the latest news is to the Chinese. Not bad, from Waterloo County to international in scope," Einwechter jokes. "I guess the good news is twofold: first, people are talking about me and not themselves; and the more important part, they're talking about me in the present tense, meaning I'm not dead yet, in their eyes or in reality. Small blessings."

There's a certain gleam in his eye when he says that, a mix of ironic self-deprecation and don't-mess-with-me determination, the same look that this reporter saw back in 1987. It's part and parcel of the entrepreneurial edge that got things started in the first place. And it's clearly still there. ▲

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TRANSITIONS AHEAD

BY ROLF LOCKWOOD



ELECTRIC BULLDOG: Not all diesel/electric hybrids are bucket trucks. Mack built a hybrid dump.

What you should know about recent developments on the **BIOFUEL**, **HYBRID**, and **ELECTRIC** scenes.

There's an astonishing amount of activity going on in the quest to limit the impact of rising diesel prices on commercial trucking of all sorts. Some of it is aimed at replacing fossil fuels entirely, some at limiting the need.

Hybrid diesel/electric vehicles, for instance, dominated the recent Work Truck Show and National Truck Equipment Association conference in Atlanta, as they did in 2007. But there

were also all-electric commercial trucks on display, including the Canadian Quicksider from Unicell and a new British vehicle from Modec. Hydraulic hybrid efforts continue as well, and the Bosch Rexroth folks were there to talk about them.

A key part of the gathering again was the all-day Hybrid Truck & Alternative Fuels Summit, except this year the audience had probably doubled. Interest is that high.

The fuels angle was new this time out, and perhaps the most interesting address of the day was by Dr. Richard Nelson, a professor at Kansas State University and a member of the U.S. National Biodiesel Board. Nelson endeared himself to his audience by acknowledging that things aren't perfect in this burgeoning industry. While he's clearly a biodiesel booster, he says the matter of fuel quality is a major roadblock.

"It's the number-one issue facing this industry," he says, adding that moving to a B20 blend (20-percent biofuel mixed with 80-percent distillate, up from the more common B5 mix) "will not be a factor if fuel quality cannot be met on a consistent basis."



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There is indeed a standard, called ASTM D 6751-07b, that must be met to satisfy the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Internal Revenue Service definition of a true biodiesel fuel. It's feedstock-neutral, meaning it applies only to the end result, no matter whether the fuel is sourced from soybean oil or animal fats or wood pulp or whatever else. Yet another stricter standard is due soon.

In a 2006 survey done by random sampling of 39 U.S. biodiesel blenders, Nelson noted, 59 percent of those samples failed to meet the ASTM spec. Some 30 percent of them failed specifically on glycerine content, too much of which produces very poor cold-weather performance. The standard, not incidentally, was revised not long ago to meet those cold-weather concerns that caused a ruckus amongst biodiesel users in Minnesota two years ago.

Things were looking up in another survey last year, in which the biodiesel tested was on spec 89.6 percent of the time overall. But there's a story behind

used. That's because performance varies greatly from one to the other. Problems like stability in summer, filter plugging, degradation of engine parts, and cold-weather failures can be due to feedstock issues. Nelson says you should go so far as to demand a certificate guaranteeing the quality of the fuel you're buying.

DIESEL/ELECTRIC HYBRID

Written off by some as no more than a niche player, the diesel/electric hybrid truck seems to be attracting more and more interest. A niche player it surely is, but some of those niches are not exactly tiny.

Pretty much all the existing medium-duty hybrids out there so far are utility trucks with booms. A logical first choice, because such machines can take advantage of battery power to raise a bucket without using the noisy, thirsty diesel to run a PTO. But the opportunities go further.

Freightliner used the Work Truck Show to introduce its hybrid M2e drop-frame beverage truck, for example, and Eaton

took the opportunity to announce the biggest single order to date of its hybrid electric drivetrain: Coca Cola has signed for 120 medium-duty trucks featuring Eaton's ubiquitous product, which was launched into full-scale production last summer. The Coke order is being split between Kenworth T370 and International DuraStar trucks.

The total beverage market represents about 3,600 mid-range trucks and 2,000 tractors a year in the U.S., incidentally, making it

substantial if not enormous. Equivalent Canadian figures are not available.

The new Freightliner has Cummins ISB diesel power and of course the Eaton electric drive unit. As well as the example on display in Atlanta, six others have been built.

Dave Bryant, sales manager for Business Class Vocational Sales at Freightliner, says serious efforts are underway to ensure that dealers understand hybrids, salesmen and technicians alike. He says they're approaching the market in a very deliberate way.



A HYBRID BOOM: Utility trucks are logical applications for the diesel/electric technology.

that number when you break the samples down according to the size of the company doing the 'refining'. With large producers, B100 biodiesel was on spec 94 percent of the time, but that fell to 68 percent with mid-sized producers, and a scary 28 percent with small companies.

The lesson is clear: if you're buying biodiesel, and that's a challenge in Canada, Nelson says you must know your supplier, know that the ASTM standard is being applied, and know the feedstock being

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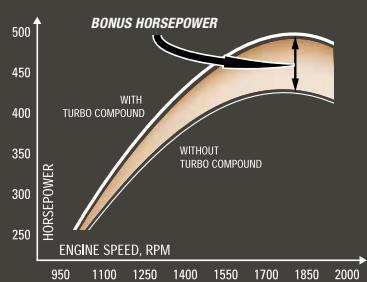
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Hybrids



SILENT BUT EFFECTIVE: The Quicksider curbside van made by Unicell for Purolator Courier is a monocoque design with an all-electric drive system by ArvinMeritor. It promises 33-percent lower maintenance costs.

"We have a plan, we're working the plan," he says.

International is also pursuing the beverage industry, according to Steve Guillaume, medium-duty general manager at the Chicago outfit. Not just with a truck but a tractor, too, and before the year is through they'll have vehicles built, he promised. That's evidence, he says, that the hybrid idea is growing beyond the narrow realm of the utility bucket truck.

Guillaume says International has built 100 hybrid diesel/electric trucks to date, almost all in customer hands, with a goal of 1,000 sales in 2008. First to go into line production, as of last fall, the company is now building 50 DuraStar hybrids per month.

The commercialization process is thus moving forward, but the upcharge required to buy a hybrid medium-duty truck is still typically in the \$40,000-to-\$45,000 range, he says. Plus about \$15,000 if you want the electric PTO.

"By 2010, I'd say those costs would be half that," he adds.

AND NOW ELECTRIC

Costs are a bit harder to pin down with all-electric commercial vehicles, but they're clearly coming. They're more advanced commercially in Europe, but we do have one of our own—Purolator Courier's unique Quicksider developed by body-builder Unicell in partnership with ArvinMeritor, the first-ever zero-emissions curbside delivery truck built in Canada.

There's another pair of electric trucks, both from the U.K., that we'll likely see here sooner or later—the Smith Newton cab-

and-chassis-plus-box medium-duty truck and the all-electric class 2-4 Modec urban delivery vehicle on display in Atlanta.

The Quicksider, on the other hand, has been on the streets of Toronto in the Purolator fleet since last fall, and more are coming. It's a stepvan with monocoque design and one-piece fiberglass body.

Its electric 'drivetrain' was ArvinMeritor's contribution to the project. The truck should produce 20 percent fewer emissions than the already-clean diesel/electric hybrids—49 of them—currently in Purolator's fleet. Those hybrids are otherwise ordinary package vans, and the Quicksider also beats them in cargo capacity, maintenance, and especially ergonomics. And that's the rest of the point.

"Conserving fuel and reducing greenhouse gas emissions are important to us, and we've changed our fleet operating practices to reflect that," says Serge Viola, national fleet manager at Purolator.

"At the end of the day, though, you're paying for these vehicles with real money. You need to justify that cost."

Simply put, says Viola, alternative-powered vehicles need to boost productivity and reduce operating costs. The Quicksider promises to do just that.

It's fully electric, a direct-drive vehicle that captures energy normally wasted as heat during braking applications and then stores it in four batteries. Individual drive modules deliver power to each rear wheel. Each module includes a traditional wheel-end package with disc brakes; an electric motor that drives the wheel and provides regenerative braking; and an electronically controlled pneumatic suspension.

The 230-hp vehicle has a top speed of 110 km/h. Designed for urban routes with 80 to

150 stops, it has a range of roughly 40 miles on a single charge. Purolator envisions using the Quicksider in low-mileage, high-density service, and the diesel/electric hybrids on extended routes.

Despite a higher acquisition price (production vehicles are expected to cost twice that of standard gas-powered vans), the company projects a two- to three-year payback through greater productivity. The key is the Quicksider's electric powertrain: the motors, regenerative braking system, battery pack, and electronic controls.

"Because the motors are at each wheel, there is no driveline, transmission, or rear-axle differential," says Dennis Kramer, hybrid program manager for ArvinMeritor. This gives the Quicksider advantages over a conventional stepvan, like a totally flat load floor just 14 in. off the ground, which drivers will love. As well, the pneumatic suspensions have 9 in. of travel so the



vehicle can 'kneel' to curb level, further reducing physical demands on the driver. And the simple drive system combined with regenerative braking is expected to reduce maintenance costs by at least 33 percent.

And what about 'fuel' costs? While the Quicksider's energy cost per mile should improve with future battery designs, the

current cost associated with leasing and charging the batteries offers no advantage over gasoline or diesel.

"You still have to pay for the battery and for the electricity to charge it at night," Viola says.

However, rising fuel prices and increasingly stringent emissions legislation will undoubtedly make the transition to

FOR MORE INFO

There's much more to be found on these subjects at WWW.TODAYSTRUCKING.COM where using the search engine will serve you well. See also these websites:

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electric vehicles increasingly attractive in many urban applications.

"Further returns will come from improvements in technology—high-voltage, high-output motors; improved battery chemistries; and solid-state controls," Kramer says. "After years of focusing on what is feasible, we're now looking at what is affordable." ▲

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MaxxForce 13

test drive *International's new 13-liter engine is a responsive and light-weight new player in the linehaul and regional engine market. By Jim Park*

Talk about cross-border shopping. International shopped around the world looking for a partner in the big-bore engine that would become the MaxxForce 11 and 13. The company knew it didn't have the scale to engineer and build a cost-effective, high-performance engine, so it went looking for a partner that had a great product and wouldn't be competing in North America.

The result was a joint development agreement between International and Germany's MAN Nutzfahrzeuge. Overseas, the engine is called the MAN D20. More than 200,000 of them are in currently in service.

The North American version of the engine features the same basic infrastructure as its European counterpart (block, crank, head, etc.), but with electronics, and fuel and air management systems engineered to meet North American emissions standards and customer expectations.

The engine block is interesting in its own right. It's made of compacted graphite iron (CGI), which International claims is 70-percent stronger and 40-percent stiffer—with double the fatigue limit—than traditional cast iron. CGI is a precision casting process where a small amount of magnesium is added to the molten iron. The resulting increased

SPEC SHEET

INTERNATIONAL TRANSSTAR 8600

ENGINE:

International MaxxForce 13, 410 hp@1,900 rpm, 1450 lb ft@1,000 rpm

TRANSMISSION:

Fuller FR-15210C 10-speed manual, .75 overdrive

DRIVE AXLE:

DanaSpicer DS404/RS404 single reduction 40,000-lb 3.90:1 ratio

stiffness and strength allow for a lighter casting. At 2,244 lb, it's 300 lb lighter than Cat's current C13.

A series of vaulted panels on the side of the block is designed to minimize noise, and the result is quite amazing. That, along with several other noise-reduction strategies make MaxxForce a very quiet engine.

In Gear

AIR AND FUEL CONTROL

While quiet won't get you down the road, MaxxForce's solid low-end torque will. While the engine has a European heritage, the make-it-go stuff is tailored to meet North American requirements and expectations. Having said that, engineers have given the engine a distinctly European personality because, well, because it works.

Full torque output is available at 1,000 rpm, with more than 80 percent of that available at clutch engagement. Drivers will find high torque at low engine speed an economical way to operate.

"The key to combining fuel economy and performance is to bring engine speed down. There's a lot more internal friction at high engine speed, but on the low end, you have less friction and parasitic loss as well as full torque, making the engine very drivable," says Helmut Endres, International Truck and Engine Corp.'s VP of engine and product development. "We really have to convince our customers to adapt to the new, European torque curves of this engine."

Several fleet representatives were present at the MaxxForce product launch in Las Vegas a couple of months ago discussing their experiences thus far with the product. Ray Williams of Estes Express Lines of Richmond, Va., told us he had to break with tradition and spec an overdrive transmission to get the engine revs down.

Estes has been running 300 hp Cummins ISMs with direct transmissions. That spec had the 11-liter MaxxForce wound all the way up to 1,800 rpm at 60 mph, which is way outside the optimum cruise speed. They let it go for a few months, and saw fuel mileage in the 5.3-5.4 range. After switching to an 0.78 overdrive transmission and getting the revs down to 1,300, fuel economy improved to 6.27—nearly a mile-per-gallon difference.

"Those engines don't like to run fast," Williams says. "We've got them down to 1,300 at 60 mph and the drivers say they pull just fine. Now we've gotta get them used to driving a low revving engine. That'll be a job for our driver trainers."

To achieve good performance at low rpms, MaxxForce has combined dual-stage turbocharging with high injection pressures and optimized intake air temperatures.



▲ AIR APPARENT: The aluminum unit above the windshield washer bottle is the first of two intake air intercoolers.



▲ EASY ACCESS: While it appears complex, it's an easy engine to work on. It won't take more than 15 minutes to get to most any external area of the engine for service, we're told.

There are two turbos on the engine, operating in series, but independently of each other. Each are "simple" turbos; i.e., not variable geometry designs. The primary has a small compressor wheel which spools up very quickly to provide adequate volumes of air in lower gears when power demand is modest. The secondary turbo, while allowing the free movement of air through it from the primary turbo, is larger and capable of moving larger volumes of air when power demand is higher, like at cruise speed and when climbing hills.

"On a single stage system, a larger turbo might be spinning at 20,000 rpm at low engine speed, whereas with the smaller first stage turbo in this system, we get

speeds of 60,000 rpm, making the turbo much more responsive," Endres points out. "Turbo speed is what gives you boost [higher intake manifold pressure]."

One of the unpleasant offshoots of EPA's emissions restrictions was fairly poor transient performance, especially when downshifting or climbing hills. The driver would feel a lag after the shift before the power came back because the system was programmed to not deliver substantial amounts of fuel until it had the airflow from the turbo to support the proper fuel-to-air ratio. Otherwise, you get a lot of smoke.

MaxxForce's smaller fast-spooling primary turbo delivers enough air quickly,



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PERFORMANCE DRIVEN

so more fuel can be fed to the injectors, and that gives the engine very quick throttle response.

Fueling is managed by a Bosch 26,000-psi common rail fuel injection system. There's constant high pressure at the injector even at low engine speeds, and MaxxForce engines use an injector with carefully engineered hole configurations that's said to be 85-percent efficient. The fuel injection system is also capable of multiple injections per combustion event, which yields a more complete, more efficient burn, with less noise.

The last piece of MaxxForce's combustion optimization strategy is carefully controlled intake air temperature. MaxxForce uses two water-cooled air intercoolers in series after each turbocharger. There is no charge-air cooler on this engine.

As a result, air intake air temps can be kept very close to ambient temperature, International says. That's good for the fuel-to-air ratio, good for efficiency, and good for drivability.

BUT DOES IT WORK?

I recently tested an International TransStar (formerly known as the 8600 model) equipped with the 13-liter version, rated at 410 hp / 1,450 lb ft, running a trip from Chicago's western suburbs over to Fort Wayne, Ind. I grossed 66,000 lb under a flat-deck loaded with concrete Jersey barriers.

Winding my way from International's Melrose Park facility out the freeway gave me a taste of some city driving. There's pull under the pedal right from clutch engagement, and hitting peak torque at a mere 1,000 rpm means there's absolutely no need to take the revs much higher than that on the bottom side of the gearbox.

At highway speeds of 60 mph (1,300 rpm), I applied a little trailer brake a few times (there are no hills between Chicago and Fort Wayne) just to get a sense of the engine's pull and it was respectable. Even down at 900 rpm under load, it pulled solidly.

Since fuel economy is best at lower engine speeds, MaxxForce has a broad enough torque band to cruise at 1,300-

1,400 rpm with more than a little in reserve for the hills. Peak torque sits between 1,000 and 1,200 rpm.

The lack of engine noise made for a pleasant drive, too. I drove a MaxxForce equipped ProStar a few weeks earlier at a product launch event in Las Vegas, and while it was much quieter than the TransStar day cab, I have to give the TransStar/MaxxForce combination very high marks for sound attenuation.

While in Las Vegas, journalists had a chance to talk with the fleets guys who are doing reliability testing with the MaxxForce engines, and a couple of them reported fuel economy numbers in the high sixes (US), which isn't bad for engines with less than 50,000 miles on them.

My first impressions of the MaxxForce engine are good. It may be new to North America, but it's got a good track record in Europe. It's light and torquey, and more than able to move typical linehaul or regional loads efficiently. If your operation doesn't demand a big block engine, MaxxForce is worthy of consideration. ▲

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The screenshot shows the Today's Trucking website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for NEWS, PRINT EDITION, DECISION CENTERS, and a red-circled 'THEFULLSTORY' button. Below the navigation bar is a large banner for 'THEFULLSTORY' with the tagline 'What is The Full Story?'. The banner features a small icon of a hand holding a book. The main content area is divided into two sections: 'Fuel Issues' and 'Labor Issues'. The 'Fuel Issues' section includes a thumbnail image of a fuel pump and a list of recent articles. The 'Labor Issues' section includes a thumbnail image of a protest or rally and a list of recent articles. An orange arrow points from the text 'So... what's The Full Story?' in the main content area to the 'THEFULLSTORY' button in the navigation bar.

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The Full Story offers a deeper look at the industry's most important issues such as border-crossing, hours-of-service legislation, the upcoming diesel emission regulations and much more.

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Order ID	Customer	Description	Driver	Location	ETD	
L297	GEORGE DINER	ORLANDO, FL -> TORONTO, ON	ED'S SPORTS E	AIR ROAD	MILTON	TORONTO, ON (AS OF: 01-25-08 01-28-08 TUE 01-29-08 F)
L298	GEORGE DINER	ORLANDO, FL -> TORONTO, ON	ED'S SPORTS E	AIR ROAD	BART	TORONTO, ON (AS OF: 01-28-08 01-16-08 WED 01-28-08 F)
L299	GEORGE DINER	TORONTO, ON -> ORLANDO, FL	ABC COMPANY	ED'S SPORTS E	MOKE P	ORLANDO, FL (AS OF: 01-28-08 F 01-16-08 WED 01-28-08 F)
L300	GEORGE DINER	TORONTO, ON -> SAN ANTONIO	AIR ROAD	LOMESTAR MAN	COACH	SAN ANTONIO, TX (AS OF: 01-27-08 01-23-08 TUE 01-29-08 F)
L301	LOS ANGELES T	TORONTO, ON -> BEVERLY HIL	ABC COMPANY	LOS ANGELES T	JOE	BEVERLY HILLS, CA (AS OF: 01-28-08 F 01-17-08 THU 01-23-08 F)
L302	LOS ANGELES T	ORLANDO, FL -> LOS ANGELES	ED'S SPORTS E	LOMESTAR MAN	RYAN	LOS ANGELES, CA (AS OF: 01-28-08 F 01-04-08 MON 02-04-08 F)
L303	LOS ANGELES T	ORLANDO, FL -> YONKERS, NY	ED'S SPORTS E	GO-GLORI WIND	RICK	YONKERS, NY (AS OF: 02-04-08 F 02-01-08 FRI 02-04-08 F)
L304	LOS ANGELES T	TORONTO, ON -> CALGARY, AB	ABC COMPANY	MARTINO BRIEF	JOHN	CALGARY, AB (AS OF: 02-01-08 F 01-28-08 MON 01-21-08 F)
L305	WALDORF SEMI	TORONTO, ON -> BEVERLY HIL	SEAFOOD PACK	LOS ANGELES T	HARRY	TIN BUCK TWO (AS OF: 02-01-08 F 01-23-08 WED 01-29-08 F)
L306	WALDORF SEMI	BEVERLY HILLS, CA -> ORLAND	LOS ANGELES T	ED'S SPORTS E	TOM	ORLANDO, FL (AS OF: 01-30-08 F 01-26-08 SAT 01-29-08 F)
L307	WALDORF SEMI	BEVERLY HILLS, CA -> ORLAND	LOS ANGELES T	ED'S SPORTS E	MOKE J	ORLANDO, FL (AS OF: 01-24-08 F 01-20-08 TUE 01-29-08 F)

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Software like Excelsior Live from Virtual Dispatch is increasingly available in web-based subscription versions. The cost can be low—in this case a \$100 one-time setup fee plus \$50 per month per user—but you get to use a full-featured dispatch program that you can access from any computer, anywhere there's an Internet connection.

Looking Big

small-fleet management *Web-based software is coming on strong, and it's a boon for small fleets that want to appear bigger. By Rolf Lockwood*

Think you're too small to be on top of your operation by way of the latest and best software tools? Think you don't have the money to afford all that fancy stuff? Or the staff to handle it? Well, maybe you should think again.

For small fleets—generally speaking, those with fewer than 40 or 50 trucks—the challenge is simple enough: you really need the same vehicle- and data-management abilities as the big boys, but you don't have the resources in skill, time, or money to assemble and then run the requisite software.

You'd like to provide customers with the ability to track their cargo on your trailers, for example, but you've probably assumed that fancy stuff like that is way beyond

your means and your skills. It's not. If you have even the most rudimentary website, you can have that tracking capability going on behind the scenes—operated by someone else entirely but looking for all the world as if it's yours. Your customers won't know the difference, you'll appear to be pretty much up to the minute with your business systems, and it might cost you just a couple of bucks a day.

The way to leap over this roadblock and into a 'virtual' version of your company is to take advantage of the new trend in web-based software applications. Instead of buying software and having it reside in your computers, you essentially rent it for a monthly subscription fee. The software actually lives on a remote computer, a

'server', owned and maintained by someone else, though you access and operate it on your own computer via the Internet.

It's known on the geek side of the fence as SAS, meaning Software as Service. There's no real limit on the kind of software that you can use this way. It can cover anything from straightforward word processing to sophisticated dispatching, as well as office applications like billing and payroll, and shop tools like maintenance scheduling and record-keeping.

There are a few key advantages, among others, to this Web-based approach:

- You don't have to lay out thousands of software dollars up front, paying an initial setup charge and a monthly fee instead;
- You'll be able to afford better software, not the cheapest entry-level programs that demand so much of the new user;
- You don't have to worry about installation or subsequent maintenance of these systems;

In Gear

- You don't have to concern yourself with the expense and sometimes the difficulty of software updates;
- Your hardware won't have to be upgraded to handle newer, more power-hungry software;
- And your critical data is protected from theft and fire and other catastrophes at home base because it resides on that remote server—and you won't for-

get to back it up because that's someone else's job.

One very important benefit here is the ability to integrate applications, perhaps the single most difficult thing to do on your own. Excelerate Live, to take just one example, is a new web-based software service from Virtual Dispatch, and it's fully integrated with PC-Miler mileage and mapping software, the QuickBooks Online account-

ing system, the CrimsonLogic ACE compliance system, and Shaw Tracking's two-way communications offering.

Maybe the biggest advantage of all for many small operations—but in this instance there's serious appeal for large-fleet managers too—is that you don't have to be in your office to access the activity and information that all this software is managing. You can get to it anywhere you

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MORE WAYS TO GET SMART

Small fleets wanting to use more sophisticated management tools at minimal cost don't need to look to software vendors alone. In fact, in some cases they don't need to look any further than the company that built their trucks or their engines or even their tires.

Michelin, for example, offers its Advantage program targeted at small fleets. It combines roadside service, big-fleet pricing, cash back on purchases—even including fuel—and online business tools. The latter offers access to Michelin's web portal, providing tire-management software tools, fuel modeling calculators, and training videos, among other things.

Peterbilt's Online Maintenance Manager is a web-based management system offering both fleets and owner-operators a simple way to computerize maintenance record-keeping and reporting. Part of the company's TruckCare suite of services, you can monitor and manage dealer-based contract maintenance programs and track service activity in real time with any standard web browser. You also get a wide range of cost reports plus warranty alerts and PM scheduling. And you don't need to own a Peterbilt, or even a new truck, to sign on.

And at Volvo, there's Trip Manager, stand-alone fleet management software for downloading, tracking and reporting of vehicle performance, though on Volvo engines only. Information is downloaded directly from the engine's Electronic Control Unit to your computer via a datalink adapter. It means you can monitor and manage key vehicle data like fuel consumption, idle time, PTO time, and engine overspeed, just to name a few. The data is used to create reports that can be easily managed and printed from your PC. There's no easier way to improve fuel economy, reduce idle time and promote good driving habits. Cost is US\$295.

These are just a few examples of what's available. Every OEM offers some sort of help along these lines.

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In Gear

can find an Internet connection, and that could be a beach resort in Hawaii with your laptop sitting under the umbrella beside your pina colada, or a cyber cafe in Prague where you've rented a computer for an hour in between walks across the Charles Bridge. Heck, depending on the software and the task in question, you wouldn't need a computer at all if you have a capable handheld device of some sort.

Coming a little more down to earth, your company may well be small enough that you sometimes drive truck as well as wash dishes and make the big decisions. If so, you probably find yourself worrying a lot and

racking up cell-phone bills as you call home to see if that trailer move actually happened or to make sure that driver John got the bonus you promised him last month. And a zillion other things along similar lines, things that you could control and check with a few computer minutes in a Utah truckstop. Need a report on the day's dispatches or the week's fuel use? Same thing.

Is there a downside here?

Well, there's one, and it can be a killer for some companies. That's the sometimes iffy Internet access in rural Canada, where many small trucking operations tend to be located. Things are slowly improving on

that front, and you may be able to avail yourself of a satellite connection (which can be pricey and maybe slow), but some folks are just plain out of luck.

Are there security issues in having your precious data held offsite? No, SAS proponents will tell you, because companies operating such services are pretty savvy about this issue and will erect all the firewalls and other security apparatus required. Your data is very likely safer on that remote server than it is on your own computers.

And finally, for some would-be users of web-based software services who haven't had much experience with anything beyond a simple Excel spreadsheet, or maybe even less than that, there are still hoops to jump through. You can be up and running in just an hour with some of these systems, as opposed to spending days installing software and making it work right, but there's still work to do. You have to accept the digital approach to fleet management in the first place, plus the ways and means of the Internet, and only then the specifics of a given software tool.

For some, and almost anyone under the age of about 40, this is all second nature. For others in the small-fleet world it still represents a challenging mystery that they wish—and maybe think—they could do without. But it's probably true to say that they don't know how much easier their management lives could be, and now that some of the best software is so readily accessible, there aren't many excuses left. ▲



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FOR MORE INFO

There are so many software providers out there—including truck makers, don't forget—that we couldn't possibly produce a useful list here. We suggest, instead, that you search WWW.TODAYSTRUCKING.COM and the web at large for software products. You might also visit the **TRUCK WORLD** show in Toronto (April 17-19 at the International Centre) and talk to vendors directly. Failing those options, your humble scribe is keen to help—call me at 416-614-5825 or have the kid who programmed your VCR e-mail me at rlockwood@newcom.ca.

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Carbon Crunch

fuel Still wondering why you need to know about B.C.'s new carbon-based cash grab? By Steve Macleod

You think there's already too much tax built into the price of fuel? Well, truckers—those in B.C., anyway—ain't seen nothin' yet.

It's not unusual for a little under-the-breath muttering when a government budget is released—especially if the budget calls for new tax measures. When B.C.'s Finance Minister released the 2008-2009 provincial budget in mid-February, however, some mutterings became a bit more audible and still show no signs of quieting down.

The province has become the first jurisdiction in North America to introduce a carbon tax directed at consumers. It will apply to pretty much all fossil fuels, including gasoline, natural gas, coal, propane, home heating fuel, and of course—diesel. If the budget passes later this spring, beginning this year, gasoline will increase by 2.5¢ per liter and diesel by 2.7¢ per liter this year. After the five-year phase-in period in 2012, the prices will be 7.3¢ more per liter and 8.3¢ per liter, respectively.

Designed to encourage consumers to make more environmentally friendly buying decisions, B.C.'s carbon tax is being billed as revenue-neutral and will supposedly be given back to citizens in the form of tax cuts.

"We were able to put \$1 billion towards environmental initiatives and we didn't need to take money to fund those initiatives," said Carole Taylor, B.C.'s Finance Minister. "The money will be in the peoples' hands and if they decide to make small changes they can keep some money in their pockets."

Initially, both the provincial corporate and small business tax will be reduced by one percent, while personal income tax will be reduced by two percent. Further reductions in all three taxes are planned for the future and will depend on how much money is collected from the tax.

The \$1.85-billion carbon tax plan may be revenue neutral for taxpayers overall,

but trucking is sure to be a net loser, says B.C. Trucking Association (BCTA) CEO Paul Landry, who wasted no time voicing his displeasure.

"The trucking industry doesn't need a tax to know that it should be fuel-efficient. Common and business sense told us that

a long time ago, particularly since fuel is our second highest expense after labor."

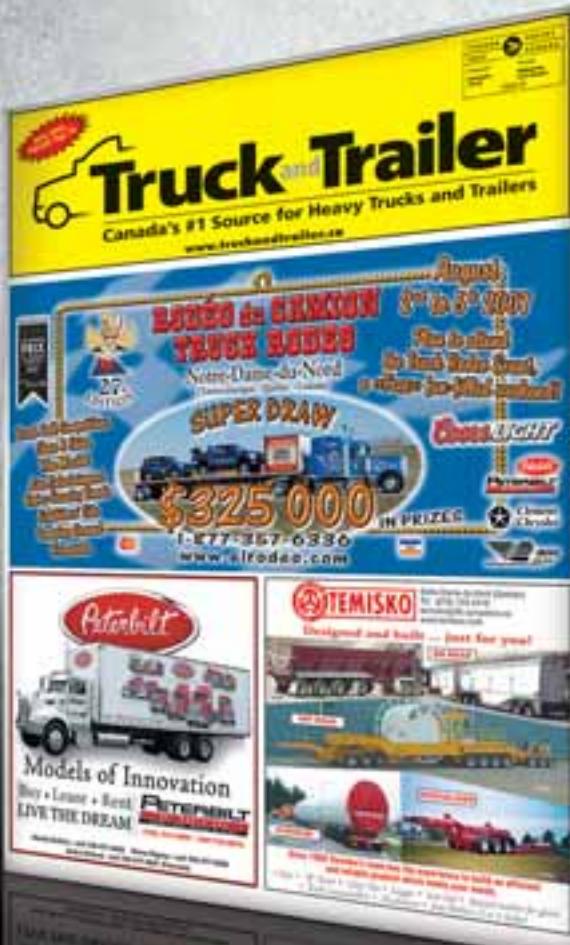
While the average citizen can choose to drive less by taking public transit or carpooling, trucks have no choice but to travel the miles they do. That, says Landry, puts truckers at a severe disadvantage.

"Yes, some of that will be returned in the form of reductions in other tax rates ... but the trucking industry will still be a big net taxpayer in this 'revenue-neutral' endeavor," says Landry, who estimates the cost to the industry will be \$1,000 per truck today and \$6,000 in 2012.

OUT OF THE WEST: The rest of the provinces might not be far behind B.C. in introducing a carbon tax.



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CARBON DOLLAROXIDE

Did you know there's money to be made from global warming? Just ask Rev. Al Gore. It's pretty much a given that most western governments have subscribed (some begrudgingly) to the Church of the Goracle. Some have responded to the climate change challenge with Kyoto-like mandates; other jurisdictions, like our own B.C., have introduced carbon taxes. But it's not surprising that, if forced down these green paths, market-based solutions still seem to provide the best options. Knowing that eventually they'll be looked upon to atone for the West's carbon sins, large industrial companies are starting to take preemptive action.

The Chicago Climate Exchange (CCX), launched in 2003, is the world's first, and North America's only active voluntary, legally binding trading system to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs). It works pretty much like any other stock market. But rather than oil futures or precious metals, members buy carbon credits through a cap and trade system.

About 400 companies belong to the CCX—mostly large corporations and municipal utilities. They make legally binding commitments to meet annual GHG emission-reduction targets. Those that reduce below the published targets have surplus allowances to sell or bank; those who emit over must purchase "exchange allowances and offsets" to compensate for their energy usage.

So, where can trucking companies fit in? Right now, there are few carriers in North America that have the scale to participate in the CCX. But as the market matures and more exchanges position themselves for carbon trading (the Montreal Exchange is working on it), smaller companies that can quantify their fuel and energy usage might one day be able to play the game, guesses Lynda Harvey, senior manager of NRCan's FleetSmart Program. First, though, she says governments must set cap and trade regulations



and agree on a universal standard measuring system—perhaps one that goes beyond the CCX's voluntary requirements.

"Carriers can get involved ... by realizing what their baseline is and being able to demonstrate the ability to show measurements and energy consumption improvements. Then, if the door opens for carbon trading, say, in 2010, you'll have all the [data] on the books and have something to sell."

Sure, at first it'll be harder for smaller companies to make it worth their while. But here's where Harvey sees an opportunity for larger umbrella groups like the provincial trucking associations to get involved. She suggests that the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA), for example, becomes the go-to trading agency for its

members. "Smaller companies could offer up their measured GHGs to, say the OTA, which collects all the carbon credits and trades them on the market on behalf of the industry."

Eventually, though, like any other successful industry, smaller private sector brokers will enter the market, and, who knows, even independent owner-operators might be able to get in on the action.

If all this sounds a little eccentric, well, it kind of is. But there's no denying the exchange's rapid growth (a record 100,496 Carbon Financial Instrument contracts traded in February) and the fact the general concept is garnering a lot of interest in legislative hallways. Word on the

street is that, as you read this, a whole army of government lawyers and bureaucrats in Canadian Finance, Energy, and Transportation departments are on the case.

Besides, it's not like these types of schemes are without precedent. In the '80s, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency created a sulfur dioxide (SO₂) emissions trading program to combat acid rain. And "sulfur dioxide is trading at 400 to 500 bucks a ton," notes Harvey. "Is carbon going to go there 20 years from now? Who knows, but it could one day mean a lot of money."

— Marco Beghetto

The tax will be implemented at the point of supply so rail companies and carriers who operate bulk tanks will not have an advantage over truckers who fill up at retail pumps.

Not everyone is going full throttle on the offensive, however. "I don't see this as an issue; it's an increase in the cost of doing business that I'll pass on to the customer," said Jim Mickey, co-owner of Coastal Pacific Xpress. "I think other guys

and their comments are just being alarmists. I'm treating it the same as if Saudi Arabia raised the price of their oil, it's just a cost of doing business."

The Surrey, B.C.-based carrier is not worried about staying competitive in the market either.

"If it truly is revenue-neutral it's really not an issue," added Mickey. "I'll collect more when I charge a customer and you'll pay more when you go buy some bananas."

Obviously, Mickey is one fleet owner who's confident the tax isn't going to stick his company out on an island, competitively. But according to Landry, many other truckers aren't so sure. "Our members have clearly told us that a tax like this won't be easy to pass on. Some of them are bound by contracts. Other companies are price takers because some industries we serve, such as forestry, are under extreme pressure."

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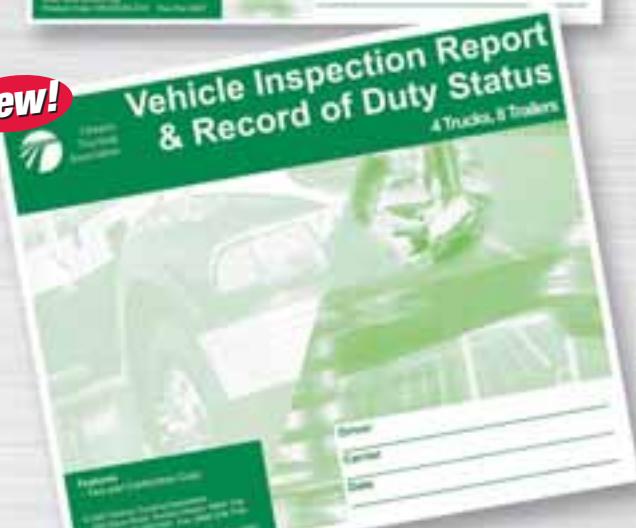
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And what about the rest of Canada? Truckers who think that the carbon tax is just a typical, tree-hugging Left Coast scheme shouldn't get too comfortable. No other premier will admit it yet, but once they see all that extra revenue rolling in—at a time when environmental pressures intensify—well, carbon taxes just might be too hard to ignore elsewhere.

TIME FOR CHANGE

As truckers attempt even harder to pass costs up the ladder, the one bright spot is that the carbon tax might actually bring the true cost of trucking to the public's attention, guesses the Western Transportation Advisory Council's (WESTAC) President Ruth Sol.

"Maybe it's something the public will be ready for and accept the fact they'll have to pay for these offsets," says Sol. "If the government is prepared to give money back, maybe we'll pay a higher premium for products."

But the increase in fuel costs carries the risk of diverting more freight to

competing modes, admits Sol.

"There are not a lot of items that could move to rail now, but it may move to water," added Sol. "Instead of cramming more onto our highways, freight could move off roads and onto water—short-sea shipping, maybe that's where it will go. Many companies today operate as transportation companies and not just trucking companies; they realize the interconnectedness of the modes."

Despite the ongoing criticism, the Finance Minister insists the government kept trucking in mind when drafting the plan. "We really thought a lot about it and the trucking industry," explained Taylor. "We realize a bigger problem is all the time they spend idling, so when you move into our climate-change initiatives, many are geared towards trucking. It's important to save truckers fuel and their time."

The province is investing money in green ports, providing tax exemptions for

aerodynamic devices, providing other funding for smog-reducing technology on older trucks, electrifying major truck stops so truckers can plug into a power source instead of idling, and finally, the Gateway Strategy is designed to improve traffic flow along the province's highway network.

Even though the carbon tax could put the price of fuel in B.C. at nearly three times what it will cost in neighboring provinces, Taylor is confident the new measure will not make B.C. uncompetitive.

"We hope by giving tax breaks it will help the economy grow and bring people here," added Taylor.

There may be benefits for the average citizen, admits Landry. But for truckers who already voluntarily invest in fuel saving technologies, the tax plan provides very little return. "What's missing in this budget for the trucking industry is the balance. We see the stick, but where's the carrot?" ▲

Truckers who think that the carbon tax is just a typical, tree-hugging Left Coast scheme shouldn't get too comfortable.

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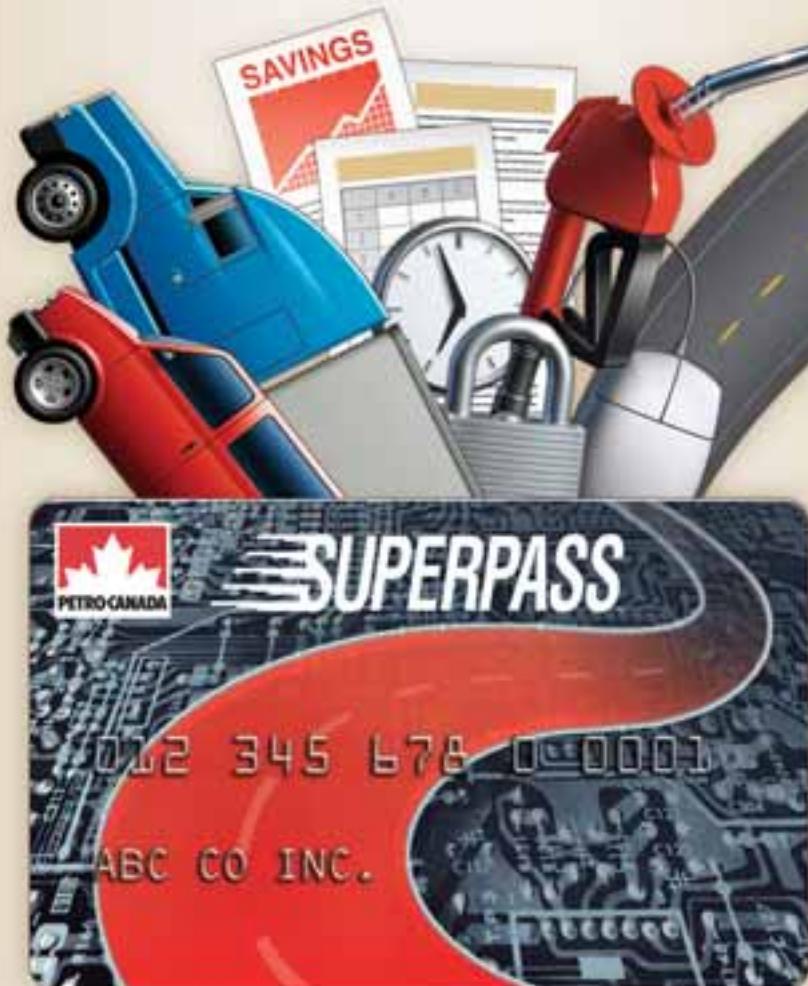
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M2 106 DROP-FRAME BEVERAGE TRUCK ROLLS OFF THE PRODUCTION LINE

FREIGHTLINER says its Business Class M2 106 hybrid drop-frame beverage truck is now available for order. The company has said it will build 1,500 hybrid trucks over the next three years in various configurations for utility and P&D applications as well as beverage hauling. It first showed an M2 hybrid in late 2006.

The class 6 truck, the first of its kind to be offered in hybrid form, features the well-known Eaton medium-duty diesel/electric powertrain. A Cummins ISB diesel engine and an Eaton Fuller Ultrashift transmission sandwich an electric motor/generator, as in other such hybrids. With batteries to store energy recovered

from braking action, the truck operates with electric and diesel power either separately or together.

It's claimed that the M2 106 can deliver fuel-consumption savings up to 30 percent and as much as an 87-percent reduction in idling time, which allows for quiet loading and unloading in urban settings.

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BANDAG OFFERS NEW TREAD DESIGN FOR OILFIELD AND LOGGING TRUCKS

Bandag is now offering the BDY2 Severe Service 2 drive tread. Working with Canadian fleets, the Bridgestone subsidiary specifically engineered this retread design for conditions where superior traction is required.

Bandag
BDY2



BDY2 is said to be a "next-generation design" offering more aggressive traction than its predecessor. The 32/32nd tread features an extra-deep block and open shoulders to meet the need for aggressive traction. It's available in tire sizes 210, 220, and 230mm.

See your Bridgestone Bandag dealer or visit www.bandag.com.

INTELLIGENT TIRE MANAGEMENT

TIREVIGIL'S INTOW SERVICE CAN LOWER OPERATING AND FUEL COSTS

TireStamp Corporation has announced what it calls a major innovation in intelligent tire management for truck fleet operators plagued with trailer tire problems. It's a subscription-based service that monitors trailer tire condition and offers real-time reports on any Internet-connected computer.

The company, led by renowned tire expert Peggy Fisher, notes that trailer tires comprise 75 percent of en-route tire failures, the vast majority of which are caused by either chronic underinflation or penetrating objects. The impact is substantial because trailers in single trailer configurations account for 45 percent of the whole unit's fuel consumption, and as much as 65 percent in a doubles configuration.

TireVigil InTow can continuously

monitor trailer tires whether they're rolling down the highway, dropped at a customer's location, or being serviced. Utilizing tire data collected from tire-pressure sensors and wireless technology, tire pressure and temperature data is transmitted via asset-management telematics devices to TireVigil in-house servers. TireVigil's tire management software can alert the fleet manager

about critical trailer tire information via any Internet-accessible computer at any time. A fleet manager need not be caught unaware of tire problems even though they may be happening hundreds of miles away.

In many over-the-road operations trailers are frequently dropped in a customer's yard for long periods, and due to a variety of causes, their tires can go flat.

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* No purchase necessary. See noordinaryphone.com for Equip Your Crew contest details and terms and conditions. Contest closes June 30, 2008. The DeWALT logo is a registered trademark of Black & Decker. MOTOROLA and the stylized M logo are registered trademarks of Motorola Inc. All other trademarks are owned by TELUS. © 2008 TELUS.



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TireVigil InTow will advise the fleet of critical conditions and, before a tractor is dispatched to pick up the trailer, the fleet can arrange for the tire's repair. That deftly avoids driver delays and may also prevent a catastrophic loss of the tire on the road.

TireVigil InTow gives fleet operators total control over tire management and thus costs, with reports generated on tire pressure, temperature and maintenance performance. Standard or customized management reports can be generated by tire type, trailer type, maintenance facility and other analytical metrics.

It's a subscription-based service available through leading telematics suppliers, OEMs and systems integrators throughout North America.

See www.tirestamp.com.

TOUGH LIFTGATE

NEXT GENERATION OF WALTCO'S WDL LINE GETS IMPROVEMENTS ALL ROUND New from **Waltco Truck Equipment** is the Direct Lift Extra Tough rail-type liftgate, the WDL-XT. It's available in three weight capacities—4,500, 5,500 and 6,600 lb—and in both steel and aluminum platforms. It's the next generation of the



WDL series, with a number of new design features aimed at enhanced performance and reliability, ease of use and reduced maintenance.

Closed-circuit, volume-balanced lift cylinders are said to ensure an even lift under any loading condition, without the use of a flow-divider valve. The self-bleeding lift cylinders, which are matched to gate capacity, also help reduce installation time, Waltco says. All wiring and connections feature a 'plug & play' design and meet or exceed all Technology & Maintenance Council (TMC) recommended practices. The hydraulic system, with a thermally

protected power unit, is designed to maximize the fluid flow rate, enhancing the liftgate's operational performance while minimizing amperage draw requirements.

Other standard features include hardened steel rollers mounted on tapered roller bearings to minimize friction and drag; sealed roller bearings to reduce contamination; a gravity and spring-actuated Positive Transit Mechanism

(PTM), which is automatically released when the gate is lowered; and pneumatically assisted deck opening. LED lights are fully recessed to reduce both damage and theft potential, and the operating switches are fully weather-sealed and protected. The wiring harness is designed to stay completely stationary while the liftgate is in operation.

See your dealer or visit www.waltco.com.

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In Gear

LAPTOP GPS NAVIGATION

ALK OFFERS IMPROVED COPILOT TRUCK 11 FOR DRIVERS, OWNER-OPS

ALK Technologies has launched CoPilot Truck 11, full-featured GPS navigation and trip-planning software that runs on Windows-based laptop computers. It's completely redesigned, says ALK, with step-by-step address entry plus 2D and

3D map views. Benefits are said to include reduced out-of-route, empty and deadhead miles; lower fuel costs; better driver and dispatcher productivity; and more accurate pick-up and delivery times.

CoPilot Truck offers spoken PC*MILER directions. Truck-specific, spoken dock-to-dock directions are provided throughout the U.S. and Canada. Routing

options range from Practical, Shortest, 53 ft/102 in. Trailer, HazMat, National Network, and Toll Avoidance, with 13 ft 6 in. height, 48-ft length, 80,000-lb weight, and 96-in. width restrictions.

An easy-to-see screen with flexible and clear map views eliminates distraction while driving. CoPilot Truck will find the best sequence for up to 50 stops. If a turn is missed, its route recalculation is automatic. As well as truckstops, weigh stations and rest areas, CoPilot Truck includes six million infoUSA points of interest with phone numbers.

CoPilot Truck's proprietary North American map database has been maintained by ALK for nearly 30 years. ALK's street level and highway network database has grown to over seven million miles of roadway nationwide, with over 460,000 miles of truck-restricted roads. The new CoPilot Truck includes over 800 updated counties across the U.S. with over 200,000 miles of new roads. It also includes 140 million nationwide U.S. street addresses and 30 million nationwide Canadian street addresses.

As an added premium service, fleets can take advantage of a connection to CoPilot Live FleetCenter which provides multi-vehicle tracking and 2-way messaging plus fleet management, mobile dispatch, and historical reports.

See www.copilottruck.com or www.alk.com.

MID-RANGE FAN DRIVE

HORTON'S EC600 AIMS AT MEDIUM-DUTY DIESELS

Horton says its new higher-torque EC600 electromagnetic on/off fan drive is designed for use on medium-duty trucks, as well as buses and off-highway equipment. It features 1,500-in.-lb (170 Nm) dynamic out-of-box torque, compared to 850 in. lb (96 Nm) in the company's EC450 model.



The EC600 engages only when needed, of course, typically about 10 percent of the time. Precise engine-temperature control, says Horton, ensures that the

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vehicle operates at maximum fuel efficiency and horsepower and can haul heavier loads or scale steeper grades with minimal drag. Other benefits include faster engine warming, more heat to passenger and drive compartments, and improved air conditioning.

The EC600 Electromagnetic On/Off Fan Drive requires minimal installation time and features zero lifetime maintenance, the maker claims. Current applications for the product include Freightliner, Peterbilt, and Kenworth trucks.

See www.hortonww.com/ec600.

VOCATIONAL FRICTION

NEW APPLICATIONS FOR CARLISLE'S WT56 LINING

Carlisle Motion Control Industries says its OE-approved WT56 transit friction material is now available in several new FMSI numbers for new vocational applications such as refuse, concrete, logging, sand & gravel, oil delivery, and



Carlisle WT56

beverage transport. WT56 offers good stopping power with a rating of 25,000 lb on a 7-in. brake, Carlisle says. It adds that the lining is also quiet, making it a good choice for noise-sensitive applications.

The WT56 friction material has been formulated to handle the high heat found in multiple-stop and heavy-load braking common in transit and other vocational applications. Federal regulations for brake recovery, fade, and effectiveness outlined in the CFMVSS 121 inertia dynamometer test procedure are said to be easily met by WT56.

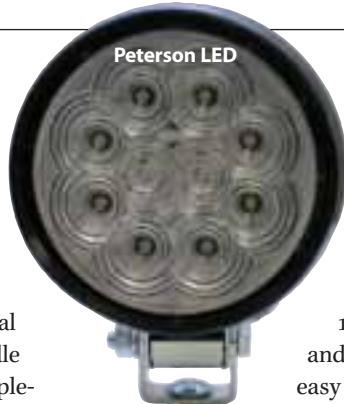
See www.carlislemotion.com.

BRIGHT LED WORKLIGHT

FROM PETERSON, LED WITH ULTRA-WHITE BRILLIANCE

Peterson Manufacturing says its new, super-bright LED worklight, the Model 907, is designed for use on a wide range of working vehicles.

The new 4-in. round light is the latest addition to the company's Great White LED line. Ten super-high-output white diodes paired with a custom fresnel lens produce its ultra-white brilliance in an even, round pattern with significant side light. The light is said to be an ideal replacement for standard PAR 36-type lights, offering several advantages in addition to the exceptional visibility it



provides for work-light applications.

Peterson says it's a pretty tough lamp. Vibration-resistant and hard-wired for durability, the M907 is said to deliver 100,000-hour diode life and a low amp draw that's easy on vehicle electrical systems. The light is available in a flexible rubber housing or separately for installation in a surface-mount bracket or traditional grommet-mount in a standard 4.5-in. mounting hole.

See www.peterson.com.

OIL CONDITION SENSOR

INTELLISTICK REPLACES DIPSTICK, ADDS ENGINE-OIL CONDITION SENSOR

IntelliStick, Inc. says its patented dipstick-replacement sensor allows both independent and fleet operators to monitor the condition of their engine oil in real time, "virtually eliminating the turnaround time required for traditional laboratory oil analysis."

Winner of the *Popular Mechanics* Magazine 'Editor's Choice Award' during the 2007 SEMA Show, the IntelliStick system was developed in conjunction with the U.S. military for the diesel Humvee, the maker says. It monitors oil condition by measuring the additive conditions and oxidation/acid build-up in the oil, while continuously scanning

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for water/coolant and fuel intrusions.

The dipstick sensor communicates with any Microsoft Windows-based and Bluetooth-enabled PDA, cell phone, or laptop, resulting in an easy to read graphic.

Rather than changing oil on best-guess mileage and time intervals, or relying on off-site laboratory analysis, the IntelliStick sensor directly measures the actual, real-time condition of engine oil to allow truck operators to know the absolute best time for a change, the company claims. It adds that the result is a continually updated, laboratory-grade picture of the actual state of the engine oil.

The IntelliStick is compatible with most gasoline and diesel engines.

See www.intellistick.com.

NO-IDLE HVAC

SLEEPING WELL PLUS SYSTEM COMBINES ELECTRIC A/C WITH A WEBASTO BUNK HEATER

ITS Distributing, Ontario distributor for the Indel Sleeping Well 12V air conditioning system, has combined with Webasto to bring heat to the party. The Sleeping Well

is made in Italy by Indel, a long-established truck refrigeration specialist. It's designed for trucks operating in the hot and humid Mediterranean climate so this compact A/C system is said to be capable of cooling most North American sleepers. Installation needs eight hours and a trained technician but the system has no maintenance requirements, says ITS.

The new Sleeping Well PLUS option adds a Webasto Air Top bunk heater, offering year-round driver comfort without idling the truck engine. With up to 3,250 btu/hr of cooling and 7,000 btu/hr heating capacity, it's said to maintain



cabin temperature for up to 10 hours in all weather conditions. You can also add a larger Webasto AT3500-ST air heater rated at 12,000 btu/hr.

The system uses its own dedicated auxiliary deep-cycle batteries and is totally independent of the main truck batteries. An intelligent battery separator charges the main truck batteries before

the auxiliary batteries, ensuring trouble-free starting. It comes with two or four deep-cycle batteries, outside-rear-wall-mounted condenser, inside-rear-wall-mounted evaporator with remote control, control box, Webasto AT2000-ST bunk heater, intelligent battery separator, and complete battery wiring set. Cost is C\$5995 for the premium system, C\$5382 for standard.

Call 416-238-4353 or visit www.its-distributing.com.

SEVERE DUTY LIFTGATE

MAXON'S BMRSD LIFTGATE HAS A PATENTED HEAVY-DUTY PAINT SYSTEM

Maxon Lift says its new Severe Duty BMRSD liftgate is a 'workhorse' designed for customers running deliveries in harsh weather climates. With capacities of 3,500, 4,400, 5,500 and 6,600 lb, it's designed for 96 or 102-in.-wide truck bodies and trailers.

With standard power-down and power-opener functions, the liftgate offers a fully molded electrical harness that's been tested at temperatures of minus 25 F. Its patented heavy-duty paint system with polyurea top coat and zinc-rich primer provides corrosion protection, along with stainless-steel pins and a bolt-on installation that eliminates the need for welding and repainting.

See www.maxonlift.com.



Network member

 The logo for National Lease, featuring a stylized 'N' and 'L' in blue and red, with the text "National Lease" below it.

A white truck with "Brossard Truck Rental / Leasing" and a red diamond logo on the side. The truck is shown in a stylized, partially assembled puzzle piece shape.

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TRUCK LIFT BUYING GUIDE

ROTARY LIFT'S FREE WHITE PAPER

Fleets, truck dealers and independent maintenance facilities can improve their shop productivity and overall profitability through the use of vehicle lifts, says **Rotary Lift**, in a free white paper.

Because vehicle lifts are still relatively new to North America's commercial trucking industry, Rotary says, fleet maintenance managers may be unsure how to choose the right lift for their



Rotary Lift

applications or how to judge which lifts will offer the greatest return on investment over time. The white paper was designed to help answer such questions.

Using vehicle lifts instead of relying on floor jacks, jack stands, creepers and pits for most truck maintenance and repair tasks offers improvements in productivity, profitability, ROI, ergonomics, worker's compensation costs and technician recruitment and retention, the company says.

The 30-page, illustrated white paper covers many of the factors to consider when buying new vehicle lifts. It includes sections on the advantages and disadvantages of various types of lifts, purchasing considerations, and guidelines on how to keep lifts functioning properly.

Download a free copy of Heavy-Duty Vehicle Lifts: A Resource Guide at www.rotarylift.com/whitePapers.

TECHNICIAN TRAINING

DELMAR'S NEW SERIES OF COURSES

Delmar Learning says its new set of training courses is geared toward both medium-and heavy-duty truck technicians. The Professional Truck Technician Training Series (PTTTS) is available in both CD-ROM and web-based formats. The courses are said to focus on engaging technicians and optimizing information retention through the use of true-to-life animations and interactives in a way that can't be achieved through traditional printed products. Each course contains the most up-to-date theory, application, and diagnostic material needed for today's technicians, Delmar says.

These courses follow both the U.S. National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF) and Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) standards. To better ensure that the material is understood and retained, each course contains end-of-section review questions, as well as a comprehensive review at the end of the course.

A printable certificate of completion is given to each user who achieves a score of 80 percent or higher.

Courses in this series include three that are available now: Brakes, Electricity and Electronics, and Preventive Maintenance. A course on Suspension and Steering will be published before the end of 2007, and two more—Heating, Ventilation, and Air-Conditioning and Drive Train—will be available next Spring.

See www.delmarlearning.com.

APU LINEUP EXPANDS

RIGMASTER NOW OFFERS FOUR MODELS TO CHOOSE FROM

RigMaster has expanded its APU product offerings to include two distinct APU models. The T4 CARB-compliant model utilizes a Tier 4a engine and can be equipped with a diesel particulate filter (DPF) for California compliance on 2007 or newer trucks pending final approval. The T2 model is fitted with a Tier 2 EPA-

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compliant engine, and is a cost-effective choice for customers looking to install an APU on pre-2007 model trucks that won't travel to California. Both models have seen enhancements.

All 2008 RigMasters now come with a serpentine belt drive to replace the generator and compressor belts, which promises to reduce maintenance while improving serviceability and durability. The new design also offers drivers improved heating and cooling to the cab, the company says, and comes factory-installed with a quieter muffler designed with multiple exhaust options for greater installation flexibility.

Both models are available with either a Perkins or a Caterpillar engine option.

See www.rigmasterpower.com.

SYNTHETIC GEAR LUBE

KENDALL 75W90 GEAR OIL

ConocoPhillips Lubricants says its Kendall SHP Synthetic Gear Lube 75W90 has been upgraded to meet the latest Dana SHAES 256 REV C specification for



extended-drain gear oils.

The upgraded lube is also said to offer improved equipment durability, lower churning losses, and fuel economy gains, particularly at low operating temperatures.

Kendall SHP Synthetic Gear Lube 75W90 is approved for 500,000-mile drain service in Dana heavy-duty final-drive axles under the OEM extended warranty. The new spec replaces the previous SHAES 256 (formerly EATON PS 163) and sets a higher standard.

In the new spec, Dana has revised the shear stability, low-temperature properties, and deposits control requirements of the gear oil. DANA now recommends only 75W90 grade gear oil for 500,000-mile extended drains.

The lube also meets the O-76 N (75W90) specification for 500,000-mile drains in ArvinMeritor heavy-duty axles, and has Mack GO-J Plus (75W90) approval for extended-drain service in the Mack axles.

See www.conocophillips.com or <http://lubricants.conocophillips.com>.

In Gear

BATTERY PROTECTION

SMART ENERGY SOLUTIONS LAUNCHES IMPROVED BATTERY BRAIN

The Battery Brain electronic controller for truck, bus and marine batteries, introduced a couple of years ago by **Smart Energy Solutions**, has been improved. The company has launched a new high-capacity model, after working with several fleet maintenance managers to develop and test the product. The new Heavy Duty model is available for 12- and 24-volt systems and will withstand starter battery current draws of up to 2000 amps, the maker says.

It constantly monitors electrical discharge of the vehicle's battery. If the Battery Brain detects that it's losing the charge needed to start the truck's engine, it automatically disconnects the battery.

The product can pay for itself in less than six months, the company claims, by reducing battery-related service calls,



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CITY	Price	(+/-) Previous Week	Exd. Taxes
WHITEHORSE	123.9	2.0	106.8
VANCOUVER *	119.8	0.3	89.1
VICTORIA	117.7	1.8	90.6
PRINCE GEORGE	113.6	0.7	89.2
KAMLOOPS	118.7	1.6	94.0
KELOWNA	118.6	0.3	93.9
FORT ST.JOHN	118.9		94.2
YELLOWKNIFE	127.4	5.0	108.2
CALGARY *	110.8	1.3	92.5
RED DEER	110.6	0.5	92.3
EDMONTON	110.4	0.9	92.1
LETHBRIDGE	111.9	2.3	93.6
LLOYDMINSTER	111.9	1.0	93.6
REGINA *	116.2	3.5	91.6
SASKATOON	113.4	1.3	89.0
PRINCE ALBERT	112.9	6.0	88.5
WINNIPEG *	111.5	1.6	90.7
BRANDON	112.9	1.0	92.0
TORONTO *	113.9		90.2
OTTAWA	113.2	-2.9	89.5
KINGSTON	113.5	-0.8	89.8
PETERBOROUGH	114.9		91.1
WINDSOR	110.9	1.6	87.3
LONDON	113.2	1.3	89.5
SUDBURY	108.9	-4.0	85.4
SAULT STE MARIE	113.4		89.7
THUNDER BAY	114.1	1.7	90.4
NORTH BAY	112.5	2.7	88.8
TIMMINS	114.9	0.5	91.1
HAMILTON	113.0		89.4
ST.CATHARINES	110.7	1.6	87.1
MONTRÉAL *	125.1	-0.8	90.6
QUÉBEC	126.9	-0.6	92.2
SHERBROOKE	123.9	1.5	89.6
GASPÉ	123.9	0.5	89.6
CHICOUTIMI	124.1	-0.7	89.7
RIMOUSKI	124.6	-1.3	89.7
TROIS RIVIÈRES	124.6	0.3	89.7
DRUMMONDVILLE	119.9		89.7
VAL D'OR	124.9		89.7
SAINST JOHN *	125.5	4.1	90.2
FREDERICTON	125.9	3.9	90.5
MONCTON	126.4	4.1	91.0
BATHURST	126.7	4.2	91.2
EDMUNDSTON	126.5	3.8	91.0
MIRAMICHI	127.4	4.2	91.8
CAMPBELLTON	127.4	4.2	91.8
SUSSEX	125.0	5.0	89.7
WOODSTOCK	128.0	4.1	92.4
HALIFAX *	122.6	0.2	89.1
SYDNEY	126.1	0.6	92.2
YARMOUTH	125.2	0.6	91.4
TRURO	123.5	0.4	89.9
KENTVILLE	123.8	0.5	90.2
NEW GLASGOW	124.6	-0.1	90.8
CHARLOTTETOWN *	121.9	1.4	91.9
ST.JOHNS *	131.6	5.1	96.0
GANDER	128.1	2.2	92.9
LABRADOR CITY	139.0	5.2	102.5
CORNER BROOK	130.3	5.2	94.8
CANADA AVERAGE (V)	116.7	0.9	90.8

V-Volume Weighted

(+/-) indicates price variations from previous week.

Diesel includes both full-service and self-serve prices.

The Canada average price is based on the relative weights of 10 cities (*).

www.espar.com

In Gear

downtime, and delaying battery replacements due to deep cycling when batteries run down. It also provides a warning when batteries are reaching the end of their life cycle so that replacement can be scheduled.

The device is said to be ideal for fleets in the beverage and courier markets, for example, where trucks are turned on and off frequently. It's also suited to construction and logging applications where vehicles can stand idle for prolonged periods of time. In fact, it can be used in nearly all kinds of vehicles.

See www.smgy.net.

WATER PUMP CATALOG

BOSCH MEDIUM-DUTY PUMPS

Bosch has launched an upgraded water pump program that features greater application coverage and heat-tempered bearings for most applications. It's described in the company's new 2007 catalog



(#221144), which includes 66 new part numbers and supersedes the 2004 version.

This comprehensive 208-page catalog covers applications for medium-duty

trucks as well as vans and cars. It also includes technical information, installation instructions, a troubleshooting guide, a buyer's guide, competitive cross-reference, and casting number reference.

The new program includes: 100-percent-new water pumps with a specially treated heat-tempered bearing for most applications for greater strength and flexibility to resist shearing; more hardware and studs with each pump for easier installation; gaskets and studs wrapped and affixed to the inside top of the box to protect the gasket from getting damaged or tearing; and bubble wrapping for protection.

See www.boschautoparts.com.

LED WORK LIGHT

CORDLESS LAMPS FROM CLIPLIGHT

Cliplight Manufacturing has introduced the HEMIPRO series of high-intensity, cordless LED work lights with patent-



pending hemispherical lenses that are said to illuminate wider areas evenly, without hotspots, dim areas, or halo rings.

There are two versions—a 13.5-in.-long 2-LED lamp and a 15-in. 3-LED version. Both provide a wide-angle 70-degree light beam from 50,000-hour LED lamps that equal the lighting area intensity of 60- and 75-watt conventional light bulbs, but are cool to the touch. The lamps have a five-hour and three-hour rechargeable battery life, respectively.

The light also carries a one-year warranty, but Cliplight says the lights are made to last a lifetime because all vital parts—the durable polycarbonate lens shield, 2,500-milliamp/hour NiMH battery, and 360-degree swivel hanging hook—are replaceable. The lights also have LEDs to indicate battery life. They're sold with a 110-volt battery charger.

See www.cliplight.com.

MCLEOD DOCUMENT IMAGING

AUTOMATED FORMS-RECOGNITION SOFTWARE

McLeod Software, a provider of dispatch, accounting and enterprise management software for trucking and brokerage firms, offers the new Automated Forms Recognition module for its Document Imaging system. The module has four different 'engines' that allow users to capture, validate and classify data easily.

It's said to transform labor-intensive office operations into an advanced electronic document management system, reducing labor costs, saving time, and eliminating bottlenecks and data entry errors.

The module has the flexibility to quickly capture data on unlimited numbers of forms and index documents, McLeod says, adding that weeks of paperwork can be processed in a few days without the need for manual coding and input. For example, using customized trip sheets replaces the need

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SHUNT TRACTOR

THE TICO IS NEW AND OLD AT THE SAME TIME

It's been built and used since 1985 or so, but the TICO terminal tractor is only now being sold on a retail basis. Until now, **TICO Terminal Systems** has been building tractors only for its own use in its main business—outsourced terminal-management services (it's a major player in U.S. ports on the east and Gulf coasts).

The company operates more than 1200 of these vehicles and is said to run the largest such fleet in the world. But having owned and operated both the other shunt tractor brands for many years, the company decided to make its own with a view to simplified maintenance and modular construction. It's a component-based tractor that's said to be easy to repair with standard hand tools. The aim, of course, is maximum uptime and minimum lifecycle costs.

There are four models: the heavy-duty LoLo port off-road machine; the heavy-duty RoRo port off-roader; the warehouse distribution off-road tractor; and the DOT/EPA-compliant road tractor. All are powered by Cummins ISB engines with Allison 3500 RDS 6-speed transmission, plus ArvinMeritor front and rear axles and brakes.



TICO terminal tractor

The cab is made of a fiberglass composite material, featuring extended headroom and three upper 'vista' windows. The cab has a dual air-bag suspension. The TICO is said to be the only yard tractor that can accommodate a second seat in the cab for training purposes.

TICO also makes container trailers, incidentally. The Canadian distributor for all the company's products is trailer veteran Aidan Bolger. If you're curious, the TICO will be on display at the Truck World show in Toronto April 17-19.

See www.ticotractors.com.

ON/OFF-ROAD SINGLE TIRE

MICHELIN'S X ONE XZY3 EXPANDS THE WIDE-SINGLE LINEUP

Michelin's line of wide single tires now covers on/off-road applications. The new X One XZY3 tire is an all-position radial tire that's said to deliver both weight and fuel savings.

It features long tread life, says Michelin, by way of a special compound with superior chip and cut resistance. Original tread depth is 23/32 in. The tire features the company's Infini-Coil Technology,

in which a quarter-of-a-mile of steel cable is wrapped circumferentially around the casing to eliminate casing growth.

Protection from stone drilling is provided by variable-pitch groove walls and groove bottom protectors in the center grooves. The tire also provides a reinforced bead package featuring a wide



Michelin X One XZY3

metallic chafer which leads to bead durability and resistance to heat, which is common in stop/start applications. The tire is said to run cool at on-highway speeds up to 75 mph. The X One XZY3 is available in one size—445/55R22.5.

See your dealer or visit www.michelin-us.com.

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Eaton has made replacement kits for Fuller clutches simpler and faster to order by combining key clutch and transmission components into one package. Kits are available for the RT Series and FR Series for both of Eaton's Easy-Pedal and Solo clutch designs. Previously, these replacement parts had to be ordered separately, but now



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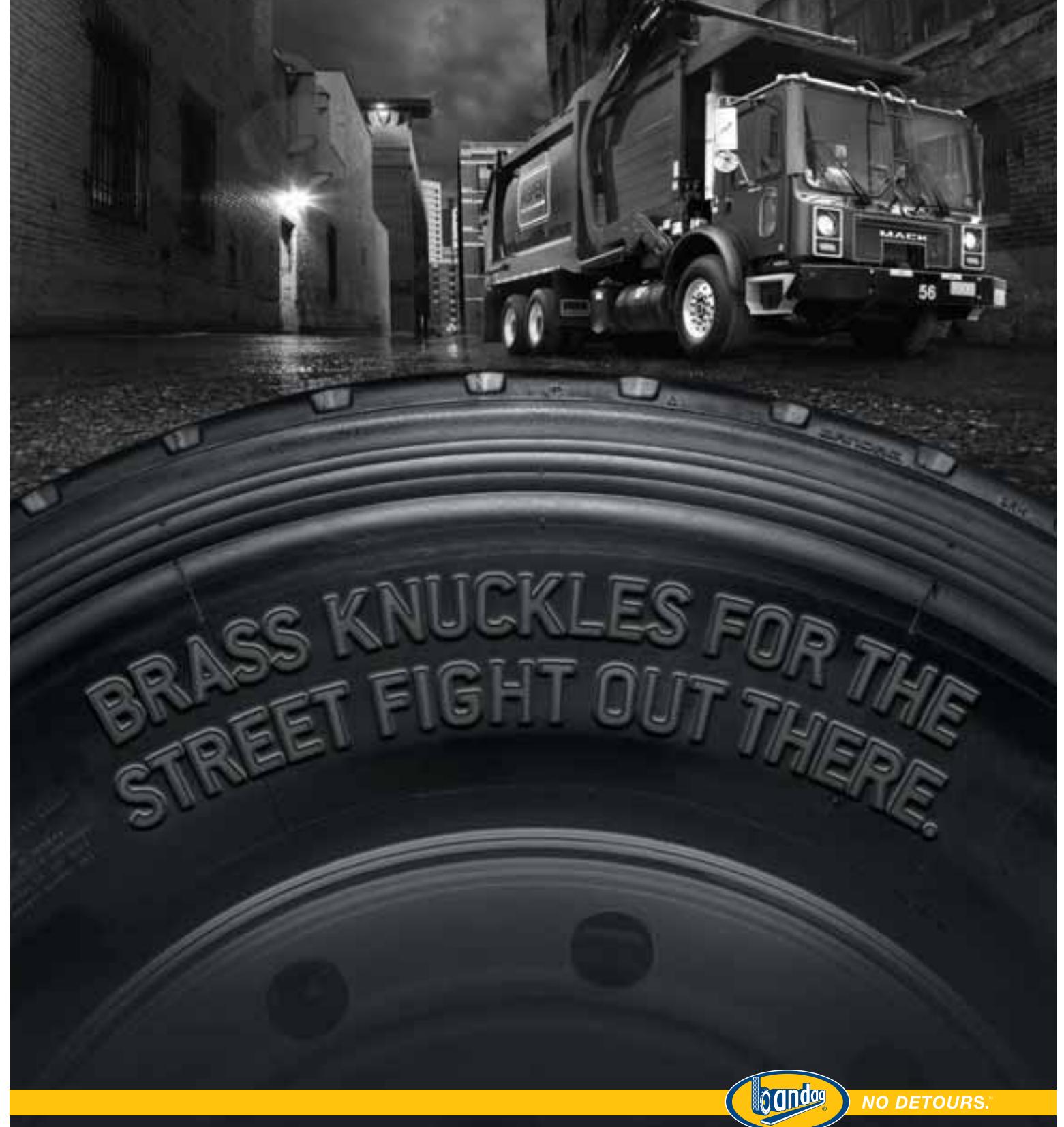
Online Resources: TODAYSTRUCKING.COM

These products and many more, some in greater detail, can also be seen online in the Product Watch section at

www.todaystrucking.com. While you're there, you can also subscribe to a FREE e-mail newsletter, **Lockwood's Product Watch**, that will keep you up to date on the latest products—with commentary attached—every two weeks. Why not stay at your computer and let the very best product news come to you?

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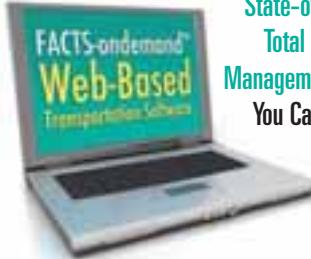
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By Peter Carter

Running On Guard For Thee

Snooze and lose? Not on our watch

At one point or another, all of the words you see in this magazine, apart from the ads, get passed through a slender milk-colored Macintosh laptop computer that is more a part of me than my wristwatch.

On an hour-for-hour basis, I probably look at this little screen more than I look at my windshield, any single member of my family, or even out the window.

Not only does it give me access to all the words that go into each issue of *Today's Trucking*, my Mac is a major portal to the world.

In the past hour alone, I've been able to:

- Strike up a lively email exchange with an insurance agent who has some great ideas for surviving this rough patch trucking's going through—"Phone your broker now. Ask if he can get you a better price. Most truckers just wait for the bill to come in and pay it. Be proactive";

- Find and forward Mapquest directions to a theatre where my nephew is appearing in a play tonight;

- Obtain an essay on "How to measure your digital footprint." It pertains to a story our web editor Russ Fairley's working on about how job applicants should cover their facebook tracks. (That I've also seen Ashley Dupre on my screen today is not coincidental);



- Research "Johnnie Tiedowns" for a piece I'm working on for our next issue. (It's about a freight-securement technology that resulted from an accident involving a trucker's son, Johnnie);

- Take delivery of and read senior editor Marco Beghetto's "Survivor: Trucking" story for this issue;

- Take delivery of several photos of Dan Einwechter from editorial director Rolf Lockwood.

Throughout it all, the computer delivers non-stop background music via iTunes. Hundreds of radio signals to choose from, for free.

You have to love modern technology.

From automatic garage door openers to heated car seats. Even giveaway "your name here" pens are ergonomically designed and better than a few years ago. And have you tried a truck with an

automated transmission? I bet eight years from now, very few drivers will be using a left leg to disengage a clutch.

Like my late father used to say, "The best thing about the good old days is that they're gone."

Only one problem. Writer Marshall McLuhan put it thusly: "Once a thing works it's obsolete."

We have zero tolerance for yesterday's goods. Or high-tech frustration. Whenever my computer feels the need to rest, and it usually happens just when I'm typing full-steam-ahead on some important project, a quarter-inch-in-diameter colored wheel pops up on the screen and stops me in my tracks. Everything comes to a halt. On my home PC, the aggravating little icon is shaped like an hour glass. The computer only starts up again when it's good and ready.

You know what I'm talking about.

We here in the Newcom Business Media editorial department have a variety of names for that icon but I can't print any of them here. Suffice to say it makes you want to throw the computer against the wall. Some people report real physical nausea at the sight of the thing.

And even though it slows computer activity down by sometimes as little as 15 seconds, we feel like the computer's useless and out of date.

Everybody wants faster.

I was talking to a fleet owner the other day who had just finished upgrading his tracking software, not so much to keep track of his fuel and his drivers, but because his customers wanted to be able to track their freight from the comfort of their own desks.

Does it help the process for them to see their package as it moves across the country? Only about as much as it helps pilots do their jobs when I watch my airplane's path on the little TV in my seat. Still, the guy would lose the lane if he didn't upgrade his system to make it available.

We here at *Today's Trucking*—as well as our colleagues who produce *Truck World 2008* (April 17th, 18th, and 19th at the Toronto International Centre) and www.todaystrucking.com (updated more than once a day and available 24/7) make it our job to help you adapt as rapidly as you can.

As that horrible little colored wheel keeps reminding me, even this fancy Mac's not quick enough to keep up with the changes this industry's going through. ▲

Peter Carter is the editor of *Today's Trucking*. You can reach him at 416/614-5828 or peter@todaystrucking.com.



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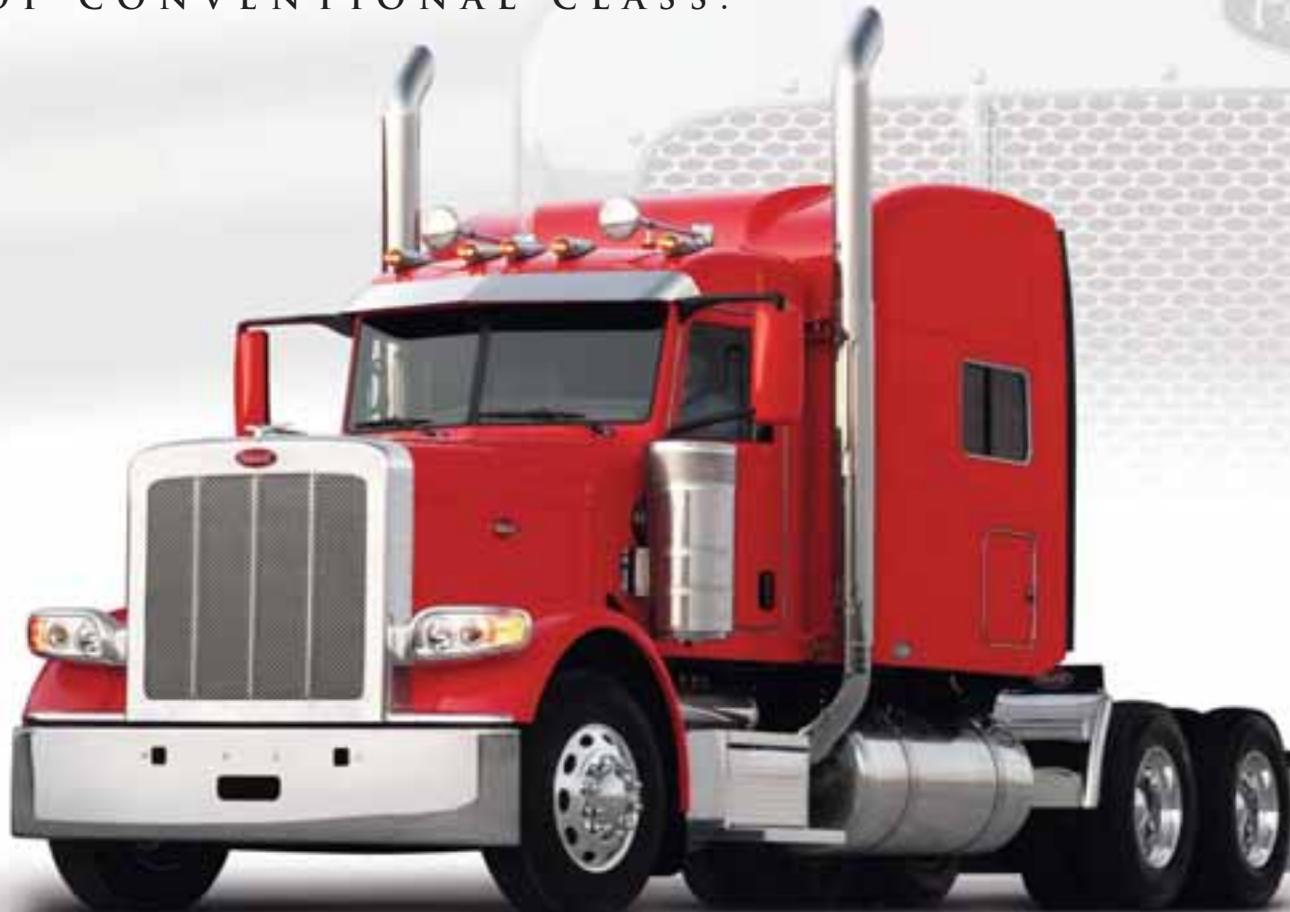
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