

Convenience & Carwash

SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER 2024

 **CANADA**

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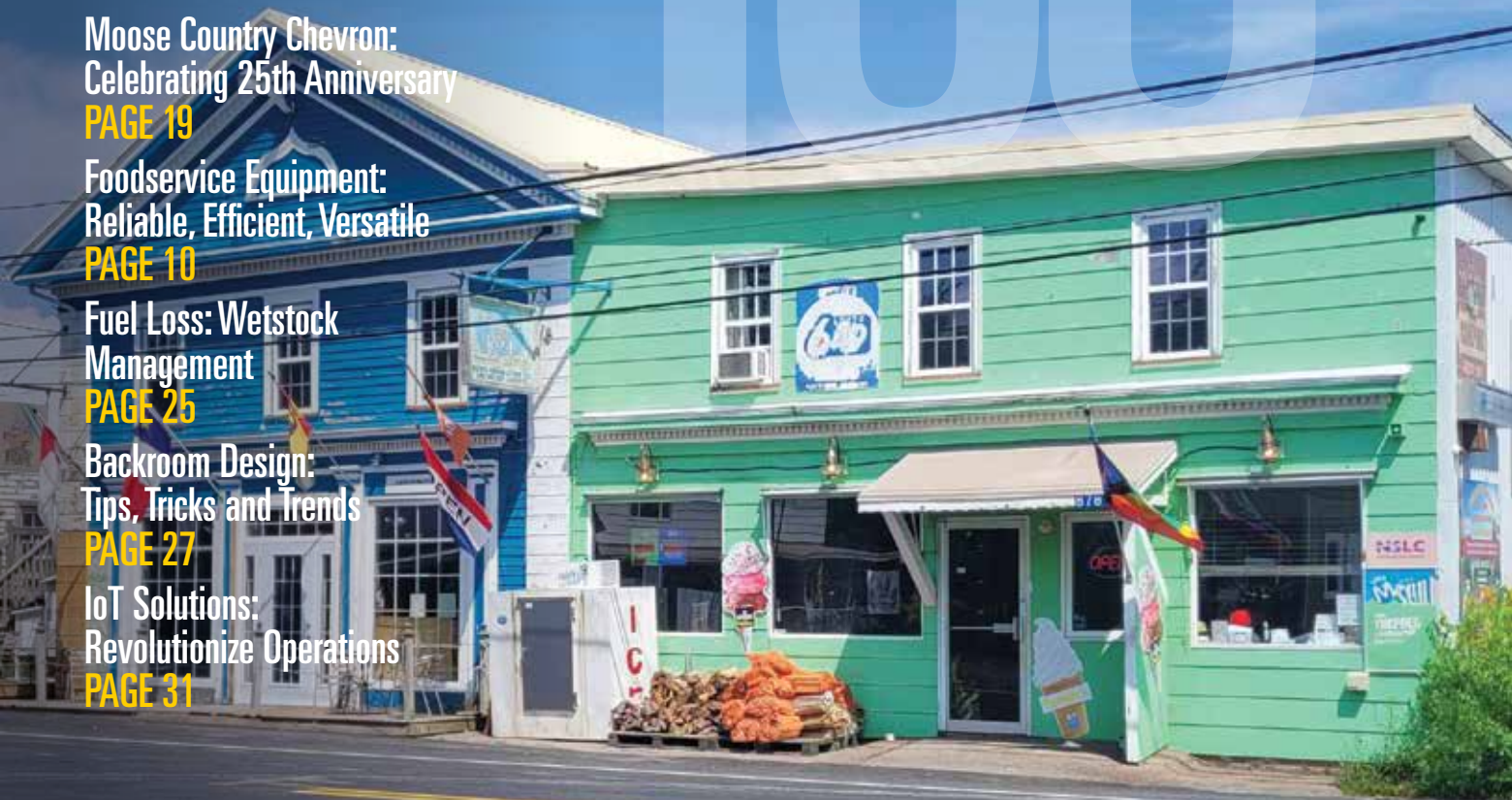
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Frieze and Roy

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Where Did the Summer Go?



It's Fall, already! Where did the summer go? It seems that last week we were anticipating the leaves revealing themselves after a long dreary Spring.

As we move into the cooler weather and, egad, winter, we, at *Convenience & Carwash Canada* magazine want to invite you to delve into what is our 98th edition! Staff turnover is a problem everywhere and with an eye to the months where operators may lose seasonal workers and be tasked with hiring new, Renee Boyda of Legacy Bowes shares tips on conducting effective performance reviews.

Now that we're into September, in Ontario they're getting ready for the allowance for the sale of beer and wine in convenience stores and along with this allowance gives credence to reinforcing responsible retailing. Anne Kothawala, president and CEO of the Convenience Industry Council of Canada shares insights on steps retailers can take to ensure they, as retailers are known as responsible retailers and that they are trusted in their neighbourhoods for enforcing strict age-restricted product laws.

With kids heading back to school and long study nights ahead, energy drinks are sure to be big sellers again this year, but, making sure the brands that you carry comply with Canadian regulations is the first priority when selling energy drinks. Further information is available from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency: <https://inspection.canada.ca/en>.

Hungry students bring operators opportunities to be "the in place" for foodservice items so to be sure your site can offer customers better options, read on to learn about foodservice equipment updates.

Summer is leading us to Fall and shortly, there'll be freezing temperatures, so now is the optimum time to review your petroleum tank maintenance and your carwashes backroom design.

As always, your success is my business. My open-door policy to your valuable feedback remains not only intact but stronger than ever. If you have comments or a story idea for an upcoming issue, please email me at bjjohnstone@convenienceandcarwash.com or call 204-489-4215.

Brenda Jane Johnstone PUBLISHER



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As someone brand new to the industry, this was a great tool for information and resources. It helped me feel less intimidated in an unfamiliar space and has energized me to keep pushing forward for the future of women in carwash. – **Mara Sanders** *Sonnys Direct*



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The World is Going Nuts

I don't know if you have noticed, but there seems to be a lot of bad news out there. A recent webinar by 6 Seeds Intelligence noted that indulgence is a consumer reaction to an insecure environment, listing global conflict, high cost of living, and climate change as some of the things that are stressing us all out these days.

"Consumers are looking for dopamine release foods but still want a health halo and affordability," said Andreas Duess, co-founder, 6 Seeds. "Nuts can fill that need. Nuts are over-indexed for health and wellness for all age groups. Physical wellness and fitness are of importance to older consumers and mental wellness is important to younger consumers."

Generally speaking, nuts are well received by consumers in the marketplace, noted Duess. They are seen to be tasty and healthy and with a rise in the consumer need for indulgence, some nuts are outshining others. Duess also mentioned an increase in consumer-driven innovation with such products as nut butter infused coffee attracting the attention of consumers.

"Nut butter popularity has increased by 15.07 per cent over the past year," said Duess. "Nut butter infused coffee is a variation of Bulletproof coffee, which combines coffee with grass-fed butter and MCT oil."

Here are a few quick nutty facts from the webinar:

- Almonds rank high for protein with consumers. Almonds, specifically almond milk, are being used by younger consumers as a hangover cure.
- Pistachios are seen as tasty, indulgent treats valued for their value and visual appeal.
- Walnuts are considered the workhorse of the nut family, used for everyday consumption.
- Nuts in general are being viewed by consumers as an indulgent treat they can feel good about eating.

With this in mind, and because the world doesn't seem to be getting any less stressful any time soon, packaged nuts might be something that you will want to keep in stock and ready for your customers to grab as an impulse purchase. As consumers look for something to snack on that makes them feel good, gives them a taste of indulgence without feeling guilty about treating themselves, it seems that the world is going nuts.

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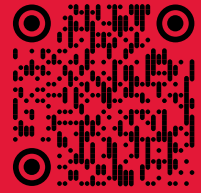
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Creating a Buzz with Energy Drinks

By Angela Altass

Energy drinks have come under scrutiny with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) issuing recall warnings for various non-compliant brands being illegally imported and sold to consumers at retail.

The CFIA and the Canadian Beverage Association (CBA) are advising retailers, including convenience stores, to make sure the products they are selling meet Canadian regulations and requirements.

"All beverages manufactured and distributed by CBA members meet Canadian regulations," says Erich Schmidt, director, communications and public affairs, Canadian Beverage Association. "Despite this, non-compliant caffeinated energy drinks continue to be introduced into Canadian markets and sold to consumers in retail settings, including convenience stores. Retailers should take action to ensure that all caffeinated energy drinks meet Canadian food safety standards. The CFIA has contacted retailers, including convenience stores, to provide information to help retailers understand their responsibilities."

To keep up to date on the regulations regarding energy drinks, retailers need to know about Canada's new supplemented foods regulatory framework.

"In 2022, Health Canada's Supplemented Foods regulatory framework came into force, which formally established regulatory limits for supplemental ingredients, including caffeine and taurine," says Schmidt. "It also introduced front and back of package labelling

requirements with the Supplemented Foods Identifier and the Supplemented Food Facts Table. Health Canada's Food and Nutrition Directorate has designed both components to help ensure legibility for consumers while limiting the space occupied on labels."

The new regulatory framework replaces the previous requirement for individual approval of energy drinks through a Temporary Marketing Authorization Letter (TMAL) process.

"To account for reformulations and new labelling requirements, food products with supplemental ingredients and a valid TMAL are eligible for transition to the supplemented foods regulatory framework as of July 21, 2022," says Schmidt. "The transition period to adopt the new labelling requirements ends on January 1, 2026. Any new supplemented food coming onto the market must comply immediately with the latest regulations."

In 2023, Canada's energy drink market grew to \$1.4 billion USD, notes Schmidt. The Canadian energy drink market now makes up 9.3 per cent of total non-alcoholic beverage spending by category in Canada.

"Despite the top five companies occupying over a quarter of the market, competition continues to increase in the energy drink segment, particularly for products featuring more plant-based ingredients," says Schmidt.

The energy drink category has seen new entrants featuring perceived better-for-you >>



options, cleaner ingredients as well as sugar-free, says Craig Thibodeau, VP business development, Hilary's Salesmaster Inc.

"Unlike many brands that have added new sugar-free options, 5-hour Energy shots have always been sugar-free," notes Thibodeau.

Energy drink producers continue to innovate by chasing new functional benefits, such as focus, hydration and pre-workout, as well as partnering with confectionary brands for co-branded market entrants, notes Thibodeau.

"We believe that energy products will continue to grow for the foreseeable future and the lines that separate energy drinks from other beverage categories will continue to blur," says Thibodeau. "Traditional soft drinks, water, coffee, non-alcoholic and even some alcoholic beverage segments are all potential sources of volume for additional growth. Functional innovation, new entrants, and new flavour extensions by the current market leaders will fuel the process."

Energy drinks and shots should be placed in impulse sections, such as check-out coolers and on the front counter near candy and gum, says Thibodeau.

"Stay in stock," Thibodeau advises store owners. "It sounds like a basic piece of advice but all too often we see 5-hour Energy racks with spaces where the best-selling

flavours should be and that's lost revenue for the stores. Offer attractive pricing on multiple bottle sales and look to place an additional display in an extra location in the store, if you have room, such as by the coffee area or near salty snacks."

5-hour Energy has been selling in the Canadian market since 2005 and provides some of the highest profit per linear inch in the convenience and alternative channels, says Thibodeau.

Taste is increasingly important and Canadians are looking to fulfill specific functional needs from energy drinks, says Sean Cauterman, director, growth brands, energy and water, PepsiCo Beverages Canada. More than one-third of Canadian households buy energy drinks, making energy one of the fastest growing segments in beverage, says Cauterman.

"We know flavour variety continues to be a motivator for consumers in the energy category," says Cauterman. "Rockstar energy drink has expanded its line-up with six product launches in 2024. Speaking to a consumer base that is authentic, highly motivated and passionate, we've partnered with Canadian country music star Josh Ross and pop sensation Lu Kala to help launch these flavours in Canada."

The newest additions to the Rockstar line-up, Punched Charged Cherry and Punched Electric Berry, will be hitting shelves in October, available nationally in 473ml cans.

"Research indicates consumers are also looking for functional needs that vary from sustained energy to cognitive mental energy and focus," says Cauterman.

Flavour fusions continue to grow within the energy drinks category, says Andrew Drayson, CEO and managing director, DD Beverage & Nutrition.

"Convenience stores need to differentiate themselves from only carrying the standard corporate brands and offer their customers some different options to help their





businesses grow and have their stores become more of a customer destination,” says Drayson. “Variety is important, and variety not only comes in flavours but in brands. No different than the craft beer industry, consumers are wanting to support and purchase independent brands versus the mass produced big corporate brands. People love the Beaver Buzz flavour portfolio, which includes the very Canadian Saskatoon Berry and the GRIZZLY Energy can is very Canadian with the grizzly bear logo as well as the mountains and trees.”

Beaver Buzz Energy recently launched a new Dr. Buzz flavour, with a sweet, peppery taste, and a new sugar-free brand in GRIZZLY Energy in a Sour Gummy flavour.

“Although sugar-free options are growing, a lot of consumers still want a sugar-based option due to taste as well as some consumers having gut health issues, who are not able to consume artificial sweeteners,” notes Drayson.

The performance energy category has more than doubled share since 2019, says Anjana Gonsalves, regional director, beverage, Canada, Nutrabolt.

“Mainstream brands are surrendering share to new entrants in performance energy, such as C4 Energy, Celsius, Alani Nu, and Ghost,” says Gonsalves. “While mainstream brands excel in their well-established awareness, focusing on the performance category, C4 Energy outshines our competitors. C4 Energy has proudly been the first to introduce licensed SKUs into the Canadian marketplace with our recent launches of C4 Energy Hawaiian Punch and C4 Energy

Grape Popsicle, both of which are fully compliant with Health Canada regulations.”

Grocery stores, mass retailers, and convenience stores continue to be the preferred shopping destinations for energy drinks, says Gonsalves.

“Females are more likely to buy single cans while males are more likely to purchase multi-packs or buy in bulk,” says Gonsalves, noting that the primary drivers influencing consumer choice of energy drinks in store are the lowest price and promotional deals, such as BOGOs.

There is an emergence of an energy water category with brands such as WakeWater, Pure North, Sparkling Ice Caffeine, says Josh Douglas, director of sales, WakeWater Beverage Company.

“Energy drinks are a large and growing category but it’s not nearly as developed in Canada as in Europe and other parts of the world,” notes Douglas “We have seen consumers move to better-for-you beverages and we encourage retailers to continue to look at better-for-you in the energy category. WakeWater has 0 sugar and 0 sweetener with 85mg of caffeine from green tea and the natural amino acid L-theanine to help reduce jitters.”

Making sure the brands that you carry comply with Canadian regulations is the first priority when selling energy drinks. Further information is available from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency: www.inspection.canada.ca/en. **C**



Equipped for Success

The convenience and gas (C&G) industry has evolved far beyond its traditional role. Today's consumer expects quick, fresh, and convenient food options and C&G retailers can stand out as destinations for high-quality meals and beverages on the go.

By Meline Beach



According to the National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS), foodservice is now one of the highest-margin categories in the industry, contributing significantly to store profits. C&G retailers must rely on quality foodservice equipment that delivers reliability, efficiency, and versatility to capitalize on this trend and seize this significant revenue driver.

The Role of Quality Foodservice Equipment

Foodservice success is largely dependent on the quality of the equipment used to prepare food safely, efficiently and consistently. In a highly competitive market, offering fresh, high-quality food and beverages is essential to attracting and retaining customers. This is where companies like TFI and GBS come in, providing C&G retailers with the tools they need to succeed.

"TFI is a leading foodservice equipment provider to the C&G channel," says Judi Saliba, senior sales executive at TFI. "We offer a range of equipment, including frozen carbonated beverage (FCB) machines, specialty and bean-to-cup coffee equipment, combi ovens, and air fryers. These products are essential for stores looking to elevate their foodservice offerings."

Granett Douglas, vice president, Foodservice from GBS echoes this sentiment, noting that GBS also provides a wide range of equipment specifically tailored to the needs of the C&G channel. "GBS sells a range of equipment, including convection ovens, high-efficiency fryers, refrigeration units, and heated merchandising and countertop equipment," he says. "These products are designed to enhance the c-store experience by offering efficient, high-quality foodservice solutions."

Flexible Options and Consultation Services

The needs of C&G stores can differ widely based on factors like store size, location, the extent of their foodservice offerings, and their target market. While some stores may only need basic equipment like roller grills, others might opt for more extensive setups, including fryers, combi ovens, and specialized refrigeration systems.

Investing in foodservice equipment can be a major financial commitment for C&G operators. To help ease this burden, both TFI and GBS provide flexible options for acquiring the necessary equipment.

"Our equipment is built to enhance profitability, and we assist operators in selecting

the right features, such as production capacity, that align with their market," says Saliba. "TFI's adaptable approach allows retailers to tailor their investment to fit their specific needs."

Douglas adds that GBS also connects c-store operators with programs that offer rental or trial options with various financing solutions. "Companies like SilverChef or Econolease provide options that make it easier for operators to obtain the equipment they need without a substantial upfront investment," he notes.

Beyond offering flexible purchasing options, these companies also provide comprehensive consultation services, helping C&G operators make well-informed decisions.

Douglas emphasizes, "Our team is skilled in helping operators select equipment that meets their specific requirements. This process involves ensuring the store's infrastructure—such as having enough electrical outlets, proper ventilation, and adequate space—is suitable for the equipment."

GBS adopts a tailored approach when partnering with C&G operators. Douglas adds, "Instead of offering standardized packages for various levels of foodservice programs, we concentrate on delivering customized solutions that address each store's unique needs. Our services include comprehensive design plans, developing standard operating procedures (SOPs) for our clients, and conducting in-house chef demonstrations and testing."

Similarly, TFI understands the importance of customizing equipment solutions to fit each store's individual needs. They work closely with clients to identify the most effective equipment options that enhance profitability and optimize operational efficiency.

This personalized strategy ensures that every C&G operator receives the appropriate tools and support needed to maximize their foodservice program, regardless of the operation's size or scope.

Top-Selling Equipment and Key Features

When selecting foodservice equipment for the C&G channel, certain products consistently stand out. TFI's top-performing items include frozen carbonated beverage

(FCB) machines and Franke bean-to-cup coffee systems. According to Saliba, "FCB and coffee are critical to driving profitability in the C&G sector. These products are key in attracting a diverse customer base."

Saliba also emphasizes the longevity of their equipment, stating, "Our machines are built to last, and our factory-trained technicians provide parts and service, ensuring that our clients can get back to business and profitability with minimal downtime."



As businesses increasingly prioritize sustainability, energy efficiency has become a crucial consideration. High-quality foodservice equipment is often more energy-efficient than lower-end alternatives, leading to substantial long-term cost savings. Additionally, energy-efficient machines help reduce utility costs while lowering carbon emissions, aligning with the growing consumer preference for environmentally conscious business practices. For retailers, embracing sustainability not only enhances brand reputation but also attracts customers who value eco-friendly operations.

GBS offers a variety of sought-after equipment, with their combi ovens and PizzaMaster pizza ovens being especially popular among C&G operators. According to Douglas, "Our equipment is valued for its flexibility, efficiency, and consistent delivery of top-notch results. We emphasize efficiency in both hot and cold sections of the store, providing tailored stainless steel solutions and comprehensive refrigeration setups."

Choosing durable, high-quality equipment is a smart long-term investment. Reliable machines are less likely to fail, particularly during peak times, which helps reduce repair costs and minimizes downtime. This dependability not only prolongs the life of the equipment but also boosts return on investment by lowering overall ownership expenses.

Innovations on the Horizon

As the C&G channel continues to evolve, both TFI and GBS are at the forefront of developing new products that further enhance the C-store experience.

"All of our brands—Taylor, Franke, Henny-Penny, and Lightfry—work on a continuous improvement model," says Saliba. "This ensures that our equipment remains at the cutting edge of technology and meets the latest industry standards."

Douglas adds that GBS is also excited

about several upcoming innovations. "We are introducing ventless combi ovens, heated merchandising solutions that maximize hold times, and efficiency-driven pizza ovens that allow for maximum versatility," he says. "We are also bringing forward juicing equipment, offering a healthy alternative for consumers."

Quality Equipment as a Strategic Investment

Investing in high-quality foodservice equipment is not just about meeting current demands; it's about positioning a C&G operation for long-term success. Whether it's through enhancing customer satisfaction, improving operational efficiency, or driving profitability, the right equipment can make all the difference.

The overall customer experience is greatly influenced by the quality of foodservice equipment. Fast, efficient service, combined with high-quality food, creates a positive experience that encourages repeat visits. For example, a high-performance coffee machine that quickly brews a perfect cup can become a key differentiator for a c-store or gas station. Additionally, reliable equipment minimizes wait times and ensures that food is served at the right temperature, further enhancing customer satisfaction.

"Starting a foodservice program can range from a few thousand dollars for basic setups to higher costs for comprehensive, top-tier outfits," Douglas explains. "But regardless of the investment level, the return on that investment begins from day one. Quality equipment is a money-making proposition."

The importance of reliable, efficient, and versatile foodservice equipment cannot be overstated. Companies like TFI and GBS are leading the way, providing C&G operators with the tools and support they need to succeed in this competitive market. With the right equipment, C&G stores can transform from simple stops into destinations for high-quality, convenient meals and beverages, ensuring long-term profitability and customer satisfaction. Investing in quality foodservice equipment is essential to staying competitive, meeting consumer demands, and achieving long-term success. **■**

Meline Beach is a Toronto-based communications practitioner and frequent contributor to Convenience and Carwash Canada. In addition to freelance writing, Meline provides communications and public relations support to businesses across Canada. She can be reached at www.mlbcomms.ca.

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The Evolution and Impact of Core-Mark's Foodservice Programs

A Strategic Launch into Turnkey Solutions for Convenience Stores

Core-Mark consistently leads the way in distributing fresh food and convenience products, showing a strong commitment to innovation within the convenience store industry. Leveraging the resources of its parent company, Performance Food Group Company (PFG), Core-Mark has created fresh, best-in-class turnkey foodservice programs without the layers and high cost of some national franchise programs currently in the marketplace. These unique programs allow operators to transform their locations into one-stop dining destinations for restaurant-quality meals.

Core-Mark's Turnkey Foodservice

Offerings

Core-Mark's exclusive branded foodservice programs offer four distinct options, each designed to meet the unique needs of C-store retailers and their customers:

Red Seal Express™ Pizza Program: The proprietary Red Seal Express™ pizza offering is made of high-quality pre-topped pizzas garnished with a hearty sauce, whole milk mozzarella cheese, and flavourful topping options layered on a made-from-scratch seasoned pizza crust. The fresh ingredients result in an

authentic, Italian-style taste, texture, and appearance. The 14-inch pizzas are retail-ready and are available in several varieties, including a take-home frozen pizza option. The program includes customized equipment packages, smallwares, disposables, and packaging, ensuring that retailers have everything they need for successful execution. Additionally, Core-Mark provides comprehensive marketing and sales support to help retailers promote their pizza offerings effectively.

Chicken Louie Program: The program provides a unique approach to fried chicken, catering to C-store operators looking for a convenient, high-quality menu solution. The chicken is fully cooked, individually frozen, and ready to heat and serve, making it an excellent option for owner-operators. Like the pizza program, the Chicken Louie Program includes customized equipment packages, smallwares, disposables, packaging, and robust marketing and sales support.

Stuffed Bites: Stuffed Bites are the latest culinary innovation offered as part of a strategic partnership with OLM Food Solutions. Elevating the grab-and-go breakfast and snacking experience, Stuffed Bites are a delectable fusion of irresistible flavours, stuffed with mouthwatering ingredients and wrapped with an authentic biscuit or pastry dough. Stuffed bites make a perfect addition to any C-store menu. Available in two delicious flavours – Apple Pie and Breakfast Bites – these gourmet bites cater to both sweet and savoury preferences. They maintain excellent >>



To learn more about Core-Mark, scan this QR code

warmer hold times, ensuring they remain delicious throughout the day. This program attracts customers looking for delicious and satisfying snack options.

Fresh & Local: This program meets the growing demand for fresh, higher-quality food options, Core-Mark's Fresh & Local assortment includes sandwiches, snacking cups, and croissants. These items provide C-stores with the ability to offer a diverse range of fresh, locally sourced products that appeal to health-conscious consumers.

"The Red Seal Express™ Pizza and Chicken Louie programs are the most popular foodservice offerings with our customers," says Jeremy Poty, Regional Foodservice Growth Manager. "These programs offer a combination of quality, variety, and convenience that resonates with consumers, making them top sellers in the market."

Designed with flexibility in mind, retailers can choose to subscribe to one or more foodservice offerings, with potential benefits such as volume discounts or bundling options.

"We're committed to working closely

with our customers to customize solutions that meet their specific needs," says Poty. "We recommend retailers start with a single turnkey program to ensure a strong foundation before expanding their menu offerings. This approach allows retailers to cater to a broader range of customer preferences over time and increase overall foodservice sales."


Return on Investment and Excellent Execution

Core-Mark makes it easy to implement our foodservice programs and can offer full support that includes signage, equipment, and training materials, all with no franchising fees. Retailers can choose between a complete equipment and smallwares package or use their existing equipment. Our sales materials include signage, posters, menus, and hose talkers, while our marketing materials guide retailers from initial concept through full implementation, providing detailed insights into the features and benefits of each program. Additionally, Core-Mark includes analytical applications that

provide industry benchmarking, customer demographics, sales growth strategies, and more.

Looking Ahead

Since their inception, Core-Mark's foodservice programs have garnered positive feedback across Canada. As convenience stores further evolve into points of destination for dining options, we continue to provide the highest quality and best-tasting menu items for our customers so that they can create innovative menus that resonate with their consumers.

Core-Mark is committed to staying at the forefront of consumer trends and furthering its foodservice offerings with new programs on the horizon. While details are still being developed, future concepts being considered include BBQ, tacos, and build-your-own pizzas. These initiatives underscore Core-Mark's commitment to offering a wide variety of products to help transform C-stores into the place to go for quick and delicious meals and snacks. 



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The Advantage Continuous Linear (ACL3) from LSI Lighting offers seamless continuous runs and 90-degree illuminated corner options to make a full-rectangle for open retail spaces. At an ultra-high colour rendering index (90 CRI minimum), object colours in the space are realistically rendered.

The Impact of Lighting

By Mike Burcham

“Having proper and sufficient lighting level in a retail space is important for the customer to see the product,” said Bruce Krekeler, a recently retired senior electrical project engineer at Hixson, a Cincinnati, Ohio based architecture and engineering firm. “In a small commercial space the lighting is about selling the product and feeling safe and comfortable in the environment. You want your customers to feel safe and wanting to come into the store.”

The role of lighting in the appearance of a retail space cannot be understated.

“Lighting can play an important role in delivering an elevated customer experience by making the space more engaging using creative designs and lowering glare with direct and indirect elements,” said Cecil Thomas, senior product manager at LSI Industries.

Many newly constructed sites use an open ceiling concept with improved lighting creating a comfortable and inviting environment.

“Well-lit open ceilings give off a spacious vibe and present challenges as well as opportunities for great lighting,” said Thomas. “Continuous or standalone linear lighting is one option that is often used in such spaces to elevate the aesthetic appeal.”

Allowing natural light into the indoor space is now common, but once the sun sets, operators want to maintain a well-lit, secure space. Adding intelligent or smart controls to your indoor lighting can help keep the light inside the store balanced throughout the day and night.

“Lighting controls have advanced to the point where they aren’t even noticeable anymore,” Thomas said. “Mesh based systems have become prevalent in the market >>

“LIGHTING CAN PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN DELIVERING AN ELEVATED CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE BY MAKING THE SPACE MORE ENGAGING USING CREATIVE DESIGNS AND LOWERING GLARE WITH DIRECT AND INDIRECT ELEMENTS,” SAID CECIL THOMAS, SENIOR PRODUCT MANAGER AT LSI INDUSTRIES.

and these intelligent systems are more configurable than ever before, to meet the most stringent of energy codes while maximizing energy savings and ROI. The best control systems use a common interface for both indoor and outdoor lighting, substantially reducing the implementation timeline.”


Additionally, many convenience store operators are growing their product offering inside the store. Soda, water and grab ‘n go snacks remain staples, but many locations are now offering fresh items like fruit or made to order sandwiches. Several brands have added onsite kitchens to offer freshly crafted hot food items.

“Using higher colour rendering indices, lighting can play an important role in reproducing colours of fresh fruits and vegetables more accurately so that customers can make the best decisions for their lifestyle. Lighting can also draw customers’ attention to profit centers like coffee or snacks, benefiting both the store operator and the customer in terms of ease of locating items,” Thomas said.

Correctly merchandising these new items is essential and proper indoor lighting is critical.

“Higher colour temperature is important in smaller retail space with products of all colours, shapes and packaging,” Krekeler said. “The ability for LED products to be different colour temperatures makes this easier in small spaces.”

All of these more recent trends for indoor spaces contribute to more customers choosing to enter a convenience store for essential items and once inside, customers tend to stay longer which leads to more purchases.

“The initial feeling of safety to enter the space is critical,” Krekeler said. “Bright enough for people to feel comfortable entering and then staying in there.” 

Mike Burcham is the marketing communications manager at LSI Industries based in Cincinnati, Ohio. Contact him at mike.burcham@lsicorp.com.



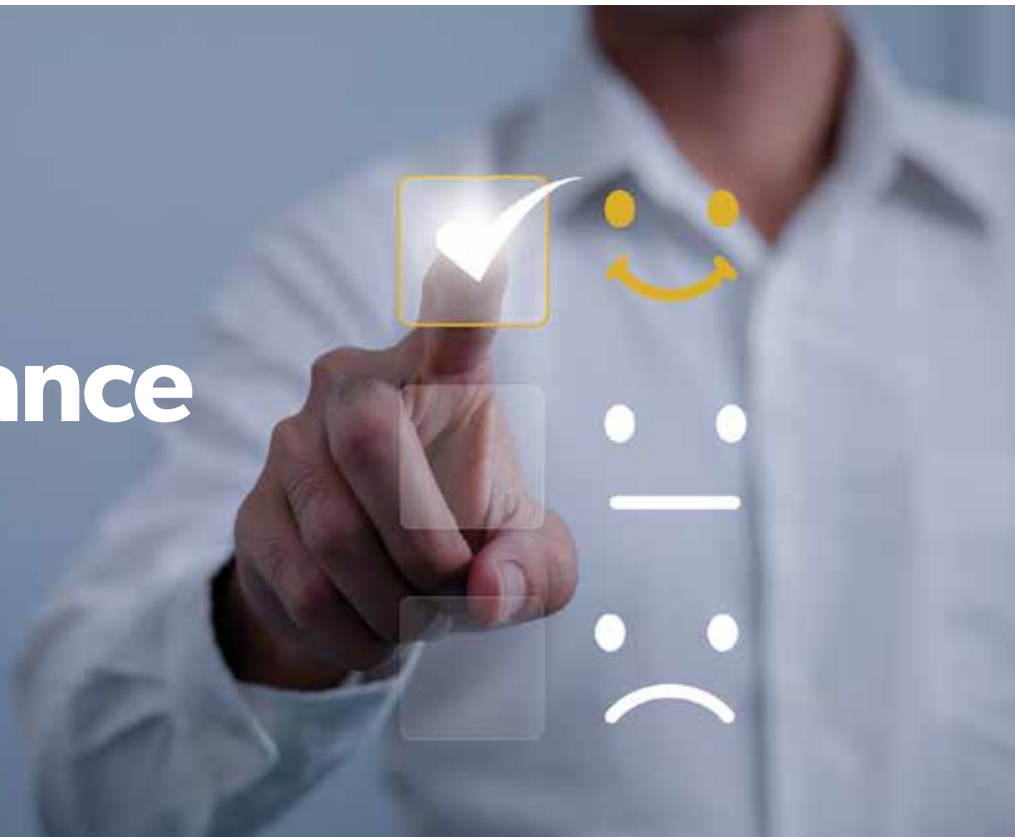
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By Renee Boyda

Effective Performance Reviews



KNOWING HOW TO DELIVER CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK IN A KIND AND CONSIDERATE MANNER IS KEY. ADDRESS THE UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE, BUT ALSO FOCUS ON FUTURE GOALS AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES.



Small business owners and managers often have to wear many hats, making it a challenge to invest the time and effort into performance reviews. It can be hard to remain objective and provide constructive feedback given the close-knit environment of the workplace. In addition, employees may have fluid responsibilities, especially while the business is scaling, so knowing which performance indicators to review is not as clear-cut.

Designing an Effective Process

For small businesses looking to streamline their performance review process, utilizing appropriate tools and templates can be beneficial. Simple yet effective templates create structure and help cover all the important aspects. These might include sections for strengths, development areas, goal setting, and an evaluation of competencies needed the role.

When designing these tools, be sure to customize them so that they reflect your company's values, goals and the specific job roles. As your company evolves, update your process and templates to keep performance criteria relevant to the job and your business.

Providing Feedback to Create Positive Impact

In a smaller company setting, performance conversations can be more personal and tailored to each employee. This personalized approach allows for more meaningful feedback and can lead to stronger working relationships. Knowing how to deliver constructive feedback in a kind and considerate manner is key. Address the unsatisfactory performance, but also focus on future goals and development opportunities.

Consider implementing continuous feedback with regular check-ins and feedback throughout the year. This allows for timely feedback and performance corrections, so when the next review period rolls around there are no surprises.

Specificity is key in performance reviews. Managers should be able to provide specific examples to support their observations of employee performance, demonstrating that they pay attention to an employee's contributions. This approach is particularly important when addressing areas >>

that need improvement. By providing specific examples, managers can help employees understand exactly where and how they can enhance their performance.

Small businesses should also consider implementing self-assessments as part of the review process. Self-assessments allow employees to reflect on their own performance, share their thoughts about their job, and express their future career goals. This can provide valuable insights for managers, increase engagement in the review process and help employees take ownership of their professional development.

Strengthening the Performance Conversation

When writing performance reviews, managers should always keep their focus solely on job performance and professional behavior. Additionally, managers must avoid absolute language like “always” or “never,” as these terms can undermine credibility. Words must be chosen carefully. Using condescending or dismissive phrases will prevent feedback from having any positive influence on performance and may actually harm employee motivation and productivity.

Leveraging Outcomes to Inform Decision-making

Documented performance review outcomes can also assist small companies with several important business decisions. Performance reviews provide a record of an employee’s skills, achievements and professional growth which can inform decisions about promotions, hiring, career development, training and pay. In cases where performance has been poor, documented performance reviews provide a legal basis for disciplinary actions or ending employment. From a broader perspective, reviews can also generate key insight and considerations in the allocation of resources, staffing and workload distribution.

Is it worth it?


Performance reviews boost productivity and business performance where they:

- Recognize employee strengths and accomplishments, providing a general understanding of the skillsets that are available in the workplace
- Identify performance improvement areas may otherwise go unnoticed in the day-to-day

- Align employee goals with company objectives, ensuring everyone is aiming for the right targets

They are much more than a HR “formality,” and when implemented effectively, the value becomes a worthwhile investment for the business.

Want to learn more?

For additional support or guidance on performance reviews or any other HR related topics, contact Legacy Bowes at www.legacybowes.com. 

Renee Boyda is a human resources consultant with Legacy Bowes. Renee is a CPHR Candidate, received her Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from the University of Manitoba, and received both Human Resource Management and Management Development Certificates with Honours from Red River College. Renee is focused on building HR structures and processes to create consistency and fairness in workplaces across Canada. Renee is a proud Metis, with over 12 years of human resource experience in both union and non-union environments. She can be reached at (204) 947-5525.

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"In 2015, we purchased Grannie Gray's Hard Ice Cream," says Megan.

Moose Country Chevron Celebrates 25th Anniversary

By Angela Altass

Moose Country Chevron in Whitecourt, Alberta is celebrating 25 years under the ownership of the Reuteman family but the story behind business at 3743 Caxton Street goes back many years before that.

"From what we are told by elder community members, this place has been here since 1964, starting out as a laundromat and carwash," says Megan Reuteman, operations manager, Moose Country Chevron. "It is not clear to me when the gas station was added. It has undergone many additions and been through four owners. The Wilsons took over ownership around 1987 and continued operating it until 1999. They replaced the fuel tanks and dispensers, extended the pump room for the carwash and added the big truck wash bay. In 1999, my parents, Bev and Art Reuteman purchased Moose Country."

In 2003, the Reutemans put in an underground diesel tank with turbine fuel dispenser and an automotive and bottle propane dispenser. In 2012, Megan and her sister Hayven officially took over management of the day-to-day operations and back office of the business while their parents maintained the responsibility for major financial decisions and larger scale bookkeeping duties.

"In 2015, we purchased Grannie Gray's Hard Ice Cream," says Megan. "The ice cream shack had been around Whitecourt for many years prior with different names before Grannie Gray's daughter, Debbie >>



WITH ALL THE RENOVATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN COMPLETED AT THE SITE, MEGAN SAYS SHE LIKES TO TELL PEOPLE THAT THE BUSINESS IS THE OLDEST AND NEWEST GAS STATION IN WHITECOURT. A 25-YEAR CELEBRATION AND GRAND RE-OPENING EVENT FOR THE BUSINESS ON SEPTEMBER 7 OFFERED FOOD AND PRIZES AND RAISED FUNDS FOR THE WHITECOURT CANCER & WELLNESS SOCIETY.

Gray, purchased it and named it Grannie Gray's Hard Ice Cream. Grannie Gray was Irma Gray, a well-known member of this community, volunteering and providing catering, as well as a family friend and long-time customer of Moose Country. Debbie ran the ice cream shack for a number of years until she sold it to Adam Hodge, who rented space on our property to get the highway traffic. We liked having it on our property as it brought people in so, when Adam wanted to sell it, the logical decision was to purchase it ourselves. Grannie Gray passed away last year and we continue to honour her name."

A large exterior renovation project to the building and carwash was completed in 2016 and a new automatic carwash was put in during the year 2017.

"After 30+ years representing and selling Petro-Canada fuel at this site, our contract expired in December 2023 and we signed on with Chevron," says Megan. "In January 2024, we switched over and opened as Chevron. In June of this year, we started and completed a large upgrade to our underground tanks, lines and fuel islands and dispensers. We removed four old underground tanks and replaced them with one large tank with three compartments. We replaced all the fuel lines and electrical for the tanks and pumps, no longer running suction dispensers. We replaced our three old dispensers and added one more for a total of four dispensers, all with the newest card processing technology and encryption. We upgraded our pumping capacity to have gas and diesel available at all pumps. We've quadrupled our diesel pumping capacity and doubled our gas pumping capacity. We digitalized the fuel inventory by installing Veeder Root and we improved our emergency response procedures."

With all the renovations that have been completed at the site, Megan says she likes to tell people that the business is the oldest and newest gas station in Whitecourt. A 25-year celebration and grand re-opening event for the business on September 7 offered food and prizes and raised funds for the Whitecourt Cancer & Wellness Society.

Excellent customer service is important to Moose Country Chevron.

"I believe, over the 25 years, we have had some pretty amazing staff who are great at customer service," says Megan. "That is what brings customers back. We have four employees out of eight who have been here for over 20 years or over eight years and we have some very loyal customers. I also think a lot of hard work, dedication, sacrifice, and promotion/network building is



"In 1999, my parents, Bev and Art Reuteman purchased Moose Country," says Megan Reuteman, operations manager, Moose Country Chevron.

crucial to being successful. Being knowledgeable and knowing how everything works around here is very beneficial to operations and being able to understand your employee's perspective. Happy employees mean happy customers."

Moose Country Chevron offers fuel, propane, automatic carwash and pull through hand wash bays, and a convenience store that has fishing tackle, fishing and hunting licenses, live bait for fishing, some Alberta made products, and lottery.

"We are locally owned and operated," states Megan, "and we are proud members of our community. We are open from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. People can check out our Facebook page "www.facebook.com/moosecountrychevron" for more details and information on our growth in this community." 



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By Ed Kammerer

A Strong Distributor Partnership Can Be A Fuel Retailer's Best Friend

We're going to do something a bit different in this issue's "Forecourt Insight" column, so I hope you have your bags packed. Why? Because we're going to take a little summer vacation to Caronport, Saskatchewan, a hamlet of approximately 1,000 residents located on the Trans-Canada Highway about 670 kilometers (415 miles) west of our Convenience & Carwash Canada editorial office in Winnipeg and roughly 20 kilometers (12 miles) away from Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan.

We're going to Caronport because it is typical of many small Canadian towns that are located away from a major metropolitan area, a tightly knit community with a population – despite its relatively diminutive size – that still requires many of the services that are found in larger municipalities, including a retail-fueling business. So, let's assume that we're going to open a new petrol station in Caronport. As the prospective owner, you've done your due diligence and are aware of all of the fuel-handling, storage and dispensing equipment and systems that will need to be acquired and installed in order to make your new business operational.

Through your due diligence, you've also

decided that you would like to outfit your fueling infrastructure with new equipment and systems. Some facilities are headquartered too far away that would make delivery of the equipment and systems you need in a timely manner a little problematic and cost-ineffective – to say nothing of the logistical challenges that would have to be conquered should any components in your operation need maintenance or have to be replaced.

But before you get discouraged looking for a manufacturer that may be situated a little closer to Caronport, we have a

solution to this conundrum...

A Friend Indeed

This solution is a distributor defined as "a supply-chain intermediary that connects manufacturers with retailers or wholesalers" – who specifically buys products from manufacturers, stores them and then sells them to retailers when needed, in the process streamlining and optimizing the distribution process.

There's nothing imaginary about the fact that it is incredibly important for the owners and operators of any retail-fueling





CARONPORT IS TYPICAL OF MANY SMALL CANADIAN TOWNS THAT ARE LOCATED AWAY FROM A MAJOR METROPOLITAN AREA, A TIGHTLY KNIT COMMUNITY WITH A POPULATION — DESPITE ITS RELATIVELY DIMINUTIVE SIZE — THAT STILL REQUIRES MANY OF THE SERVICES THAT ARE FOUND IN LARGER MUNICIPALITIES, INCLUDING A RETAIL-FUELING BUSINESS.

business – no matter the location or site demographics – to identify and build a good, trusting relationship with a distributor partner. A good distributor not only has a ready supply of equipment on hand should the operator need it, but can offer a number of other benefits to the business, the most basic of which is tribal knowledge of the area that can be shared as the business is being planned.

Knowledgeable distributors can provide advantages for equipment manufacturers, as well, with their experience within the territory enabling them to educate the manufacturer on what types of equipment and systems other retailers are using and when it is being used. In the end, the retail-fueling industry is only as successful as its distribution channels. Sure, the ultimate job of the retailer is to provide fuel to their network of customers, but don't forget about the guys and gals in the middle who handle logistics, help schedule service visits and make sure that all the pieces and parts that go into building a successful retail-fueling business are always in place.

Finding The Best Partner

But how do you know you're partnering with the right distributor? These six recommendations can help you not only find the right one, but then help

you use their expertise to optimize the performance of your retail-fueling business.

1. Perform Due Diligence

Research the market area in which you will be operating. Talk to the local Chamber of Commerce, for example, to see what they can tell you about the distributors in the area, including any significant successes they've had. The objective is to use the resources at your disposal to identify a distributor with a strong reputation who can be your ally as you work through the site selection, permitting, equipment selection, installation process and, eventually, service.

2. Lean On Local Knowledge

Distributors who know the area can provide important information regarding population demographics, travel patterns and other important variables that can be determining factors in the ultimate success of your business. The distributor can also provide background on any competitors in the area and may also be able provide some insight on what has been successful or unsuccessful for them.

>>

3. Take Advantage Of Product Expertise

The best distributors are the ones who know the systems that they sell and represent inside and out. This knowledge can be indispensable when the operator is trying to decide, for instance, what types of fueling nozzles to use or which secondary-containment system is the most waterproof.

4. Manufacturer Alignment

Make sure your distributor is partnered with the most innovative manufacturers in the industry. Be sure the distributor is up to date on all new products the manufacturer has to offer and has attended manufacturer-sponsored activities such as factory visits, seminars and training classes. And, finally, work with the distributor to ensure that a sufficient amount of stock or inventory of the essential fueling components you may need quickly is kept onsite.

5. Look Down The Road

A distributor who is familiar with the latest changes, upgrades or enhancements in equipment technology can also help keep the retail-fueling business operating on the cutting edge. This can include next-generation sump technologies that improve uptime and reduce maintenance costs or fueling nozzles that have been designed to deliver a cleaner fueling experience for drivers.

6. Plan For An Emergency

There is always a chance, especially as systems age, that an equipment breakdown will occur or some form of preventive maintenance will be required. To ensure that profit-absorbing downtime and repair or replacement costs are kept to the bare minimum, partner with a distributor who not only has a vast knowledge of the complete fueling system, but also employs a staff of technicians who are able to respond quickly and have the expertise to quickly and reliably expedite any equipment emergency.

Conclusion

Building a successful retail-fueling business can be a daunting task – especially if you try to go it alone. That’s why distributors – described by some as “the lifeblood of the retail-fueling industry” – can be your best friend. They not only serve as a conduit between you and the manufacturer,



**HAVING LOCAL PARTS
SUPPORT IS SO IMPORTANT
AS IT HELPS MINIMIZE
DOWNTIME AND WILL ONLY
ENHANCE THE CUSTOMER
EXPERIENCE.**

but can be an advocate for your operation in many different and significant ways, from sharing their deep well of local knowledge regarding what does and doesn’t work to filling you in on the latest fueling-system innovations.

Remember, site downtime or “bag on nozzle” syndrome can send the customer base looking for alternatives. However, during the life cycle of any retail-fueling outlet the equipment and systems will wear and age due to use and abuse. That’s what makes having local parts support so important as it helps minimize downtime and will only enhance the customer experience. In the end, identifying and partnering with a good, reliable distributor can be as critical as choosing the best retail-fueling equipment and systems, with the end result being a stronger business with a healthier bottom line.

Ed Kammerer is the senior director, global product management for OPW, based in Cincinnati, OH, USA. He can be reached at ed.kammerer@opwglobal.com. For more information on OPW go to opwglobal.com.

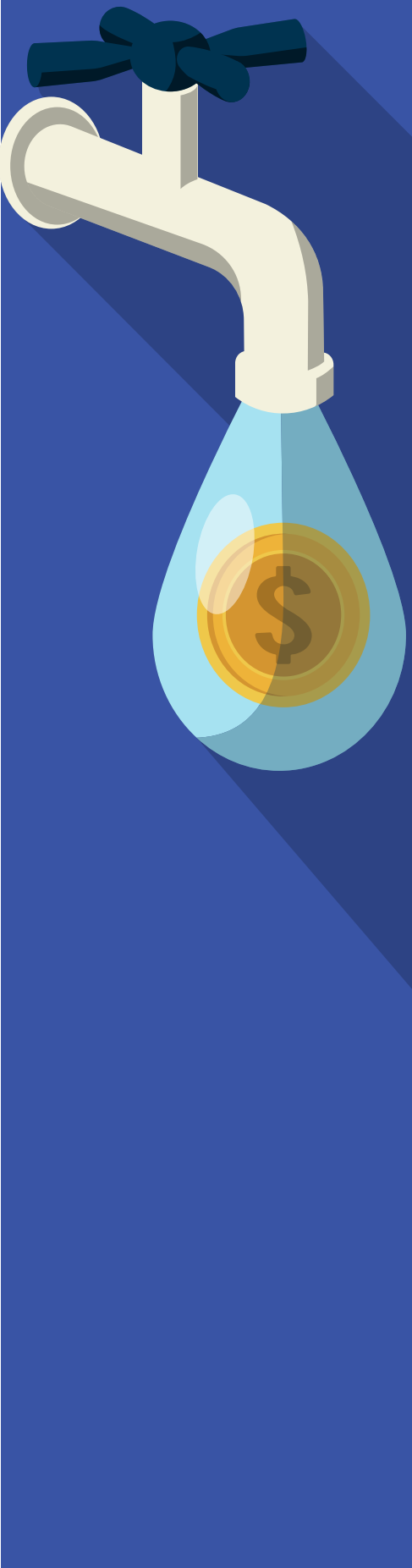
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FUELED BY EXCELLENCE



By Brian Reynolds

Fix Your Fuel, Fix Your Finances: **Wetstock Management's Impact on the Bottom Line**

Fuel loss may be causing more strain on your business than you think. How do you account for that?

With over 60 ways an actual or perceived fuel loss can occur, operators may be at more risk than they realize or that their systems can detect. Some of the more common monetary costs are false alarms, delivery shortages, fuel theft, tank leaks and meter drift. We'll look at how these issues can affect your bottom line and how to better protect wetstock to keep profit margins up.

Temperature fluctuations trigger excess investigations

A known form of loss is attributed to temperature fluctuation. Surrounding temperatures outside the tanker can cause evaporation, expansion and contraction, leading to variances between recorded origin and destination volumes. While temperature losses are acceptable due to the fact that there is little that can be done to avoid them, the reality is a temperature loss is likely to be many times less than what actually disappears in total loss variances.

Total fuel loss variance investigations are difficult to figure out without sophisticated analytics. Without the aid of analytics, additional financial expense over time can be expected. Incidents of temperature fluctuation are very common but not usually a significant source of loss, which means being able to determine when a discrepancy is a result of perceived loss prevents wasted time and money.

False alerts can be reduced by investing in wetstock management systems that automatically monitor and identify certified high variances. For example, in a six-month study of ten stations using DX Wetstock, a wetstock management solution offered by Dover Fueling Solutions, thousands of alarms were collected with

only five per cent resulting in an escalation or site visit. Compare that with 20 per cent of flags resulting in investigation when not using a wetstock management solution like this, and we see how quickly this makes a difference.

A moving target complicates tracking

Unintentional shortages in delivery are common, even when skimming hasn't occurred in transport. While shortages may be small at the time of delivery, losses add up.

Promptly comparing the bill of lading to tank volume during delivery will detect deficits within a small window of time. Automatic tank gauging and dispenser sales, along with proven sophisticated algorithms monitored with artificial intelligence, will in real-time identify probable and actionable losses.

Remote wetstock monitoring services are perhaps the only effective method for measuring and flagging high variances in real-time before they impact profitability. Wetstock monitoring can also help determine when a perceived delivery shortage is a false alarm.

Fuel theft is ever evolving

Headlines on fuel theft are abundant, and many good deterrents are circumvented over time by determined perpetrators. The best defense includes carefully monitoring fuel inventory with solutions that offer real-time alerts.

Crooks understand the concept of risk vs rewards. With higher fuel prices, incidents of theft and fraud increase proportionately; hundreds or thousands of liters in one stealing spree. Fuel theft is no longer something lurking in the shadows; it is happening in broad daylight during normal >>

service hours. Employing a theft preparedness strategy versus recovery approach is imperative.

Well organized criminal enterprises target both small and large businesses, typically done in broad daylight to confuse the store and automatic tank gauges by disguising as authorized technicians or even government regulators. No matter the size of your operation, maintaining an advanced wetstock management system with real-time alerts is a reliable and stable form of security against evolving criminal activity.

Tank leaks bring heavy financial burden

Environmental fees, cleanup and equipment costs for tank leaks can be devastating for owners. Average cleanup costs can exceed CA\$175,000 in addition to lost fuel, fines and reputational impact.

Referring to the same study overseen by DFS, four detected tank leaks resulted in loss of over 2,000 gallons (7,570 liters) of fuel. Had the leaks continued for 12 months without detection, the incidents would have cost over \$550,000 USD (approximately CA\$750,000) for the retailers. Avoiding tank leaks is of the utmost importance, but

time-to-response can make a large financial impact. Effective wetstock management solutions can help you detect leaks before they become debilitating problems.

Almost as bad as an environmental catastrophe due to an actual release is not being able to provide accurate records in a moment's notice! Automated cloud technology will reliably produce records and test results for whoever requires them. You can either "be fine or be fined."

Fuel lost to meter drift adds up

The best defense against meter drift is proper selection of equipment built to meet the demands of your site as well as regular maintenance of parts. In a network of 10 forecourts, just two meters experiencing regular and significant drift are enough to over-dispense 28,000 liters of fuel within a year. At 162 cents per liter, that would amount to over CA\$45,000 in unrealized revenue.

While maintenance for aging meters and other forecourt equipment can compound, automated compliance and maintenance trackers for dispensers and other site equipment can help relieve operational burden.

When used in tandem with advanced wetstock technology, you get an end-to-end solution for lowering financial risk.

Implementing your own wetstock strategy

So how do you know if you need to update your wetstock management tools? Evaluate your current method and capabilities for gaps in the above-mentioned risk areas. If you feel you've accounted for your most likely risks, what will you need in future? Get ahead of incidents by increasing foresight and insight capabilities.

With technological advancement in tank gauging and monitoring solutions gaining speed, opportunities for strengthening and tailoring your strategies are too. Generally, adopting automated and digital solutions can require more upfront investment but result in longer-term savings with operational ease and mitigated human error. Investing in modern wetstock technology could be a wise change that saves your bottom line in the long run. **■**

Brian Reynolds is a strategic accounts manager with Dover Fueling Solutions.



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By John Pinson

Backroom Best Practices

Tips, Tricks and Trends in Carwash Backroom Design

Go behind the suds of the average carwash and you'll find a backroom that's woefully inadequate in form and function. Too few operators understand the risks they face or costs they incur from poorly set-up backrooms. Likewise, even savvy owners often don't know that technology exists to turn their backroom into carwash command central – an epicenter of control and profitability.

Far beyond the basics of soap and water, backrooms are a microcosm of the health of a carwash business. Want a better performing carwash, safer employees, happier customers and a more profitable business? Follow these guidelines to buff up your backroom and transform your carwash operation.

Efficient Setup of Essential Components

Most equipment is located in or controlled from the backroom – the nerve center of the carwash. This includes water equipment, chemical storage, dilution and dispensing, and power units for all machinery. Proper set-up of modern carwashes involves organizing backroom components such as reverse osmosis (RO) systems (filtration), reclaim units (water recycling), solution control centers (dilution and dispensing), pumping stations, chemical and water tanks and lines, and water and power supply.

It might be a stretch to call it “feng shui,” but the arrangement and flow of backrooms is an art, one that benefits from professional

expertise. It helps to think of it the way a chef might organize a kitchen: everything should be placed strategically to ensure flow and accessibility, allowing for economy of movement and minimal interference.

Key Setup Considerations:

- **Strategic Placement:** Moving heavy equipment or trying to work around it is not only frustrating but costly. Install equipment like RO systems, water softeners, and solution control centers in accessible areas to facilitate maintenance and avoid blockages.
- **Smart Storage Solutions:** Utilize vertical space for chemical storage with wall-mounted shelves and consider compact solutions like ultra concentrated chemicals that require less storage footprint but deliver the same cleaning power.
- **Efficient Water and Power Flow:** Arrange your water delivery systems and electrical panels to prevent leakages and ensure they are not in areas prone to freezing.
- **Foot Traffic:** Consider anticipated movement through the space. Insufficient space to move safely between storage containers or equipment is irritating and also a major liability for tripping over objects, causing accidents and injuries. >>

Avoiding Common Setup Mistakes

Many backroom issues stem from poor initial design and planning. Here are common pitfalls and how to avoid them:

- **Inaccessible Equipment:** Never block access to essential panels and controls. Easy access is crucial for quick repairs and adjustments. Don't block one type of equipment with another or with storage containers that are difficult to move.
- **Poor Climate Control:** Implement proper insulation and heating solutions to protect equipment from cold and damp conditions that can lead to costly damages. Ensure manufacturer instructions are followed for optimal operating temperatures. Don't skimp on heat or AC to save a few bucks in the short term – it could cost you later.
- **Professional Installation:** Relying on expert installers can prevent many operational headaches down the line. Proper installation ensures that all systems communicate well, function efficiently, and are organized for easy access and flow.

Safety and Organization

Safety should always be a priority in the design of any carwash backroom. “Yeah, right, like we’re really gonna do that” is not an acceptable attitude. Set protocols and follow them, tracking them and reinforcing them with all employees at all times.

- **Clear Signage and Safety Stations:** Implement lock-out/tag-out systems for electrical safety, eye wash stations near chemical storage, and adequate personal protective equipment. MSDS (Materials Safety Data Sheets) documents should be near any chemicals in case of spills.
- **Effective Organization Tools:** Use maintenance planners and organizational systems to keep track of equipment servicing and ensure everything is in its place, reducing potential hazards.

Best Practices for Lighting and General Maintenance

- **Lighting:** Ensure the backroom is well-lit with LED lights and consider motion sensors to reduce energy consumption without compromising safety.
- **Regular Maintenance Checks:** Implement a routine backroom maintenance schedule and use modern platforms that provide reminders and maintenance logs to keep everything running smoothly. A dusty old binder with wrinkled, rarely-updated pages is a sign that better maintenance tracking is needed.

Customizing for a Full Service Wash

If your business incorporates a full serve carwash, your backroom demands are likely greater, especially for storage space. Design accordingly.

Incorporate ample storage for customer service items like towels and cleaning agents, and ensure there are facilities like washers and dryers. Don't treat backroom equipment as shelving. Install proper cabinets, shelves and organizers for all goods.

Avoid the temptation to let your backroom become a catch-all or general storage. Designate closets or break areas for lunch items, drinks, backpacks, uniforms or other personal items.

Innovations Shaping the Future of Backrooms

Recent technological advancements have revolutionized how carwash backrooms can be managed. Here are a few innovations making significant impacts:

- **Remote Monitoring and Control:** Modern carwash systems can integrate sensors, cloud-based software and a wireless backroom hub to allow operators to monitor and control equipment remotely via smartphones or tablets.

Predictive Maintenance and Downtime

Reduction: Real-time alerts allow for immediate trouble-shooting. Sophisticated tools detect backroom equipment wear or malfunction ahead of time, ensuring quick resolution and maximum uptime.

- **Precision Chemical Dosing:** New surgical grade dosing technology cuts chemical waste, saves costs and ensures a consistent, high-quality “clean, dry and shiny.”

In the Forefront of Success

The key takeaway is that your carwash backroom should be front and center in your business. An efficiently designed carwash backroom not only streamlines operations but also impacts the bottom line. By following best practices, avoiding common pitfalls, planning carefully and leveraging new technologies, operators can ensure their carwash business thrives in a competitive market. **■**

John Pinson is manager connected services at National Carwash Solutions. John can be reached at jpinson@ncswash.com with any questions.

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Frieze and Roy

Serving Maitland, Nova Scotia for 185 Years



Troy Robertson, owner, Frieze and Roy

**THE GENERAL STORE,
"WHERE HISTORY,
HOSPITALITY, AND
HERITAGE UNITE TO
CREATE A UNIQUE
CANADIAN EXPERIENCE,"
WAS ORIGINALLY
STARTED IN 1839 BY
DAVID FRIEZE, WHO WAS
LATER JOINED IN THE
BUSINESS BY ADAM ROY.**

Frieze and Roy in Maitland, Nova Scotia is celebrating 185 years in business.

Consider the fact that the creation of the Dominion of Canada took place 157 years ago, on July 1, 1867, and you quickly realize that this general store has a remarkably impressive history.

"We have been the heart of Maitland for 185 years," says owner Troy Robertson, "it is incredible. We are the oldest general store in Canada, according to the Government of Canada and a letter from Prime Minister Trudeau. We have customers who have been coming here for a long time. One of our customers, Albert, is 95 years old and has been coming here his entire life."

The general store, "where history, hospitality, and heritage unite to create a unique Canadian experience," was originally started in 1839 by David Frieze, who was later joined in the business by Adam Roy. Robertson, who has owned the business for 15 years, says it has changed on a regular basis, keeping in tune with ways to support the Maitland community. Reflecting on the original store, Robertson comments that it was "an incredible business; the biggest sales day on the books was in 1862 with total sales for the day of \$27,000. That number is correct. They completely loaded 14 ships that day."

General manager Jennifer Wiles shares a fond enthusiasm for the experience of working at Frieze and Roy.

"I love my job," says Wiles. "It's easy to get up in the morning and be happy to go to work. I get to know my frequent customers and it's so nice to be greeted by your name as they enter or vice-versa. We are a small community and everyone is very nice. I have been with the Frieze and Roy business for 11 years now and I am so grateful to be a part of the oldest operating store in Canada."

Robertson has completed several renovations at the store since taking over the business. Currently operating as a general store, restaurant and gift shop, Robertson says one of their most popular items is ice cream in the summer. The business is also a Nova Scotia Liquor Commission (NSLC) location.

Describing Frieze and Roy as a place with incredible people, delicious meals and a wonderful view of the Bay of Fundy, Robertson looks ahead to the future saying he would like to see the community grow and Frieze and Roy to be there for another 185 years. To find out more about Frieze and Roy visit www.friezeandroy.com.



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Revolutionize Operations: Integrating IoT Solutions for Ultimate Efficiency

Imagine a world where your coffee machine brews your favourite blend just as you wake up, your thermostat adjusts to the perfect temperature before you step through the door, and your car schedules its own maintenance. Welcome to the era of remote technology, commonly known as the Internet of Things (IoT), where everyday objects are smarter, more efficient, and seamlessly connected.

IoT has existed for almost a half century, and it connects events and processes (through devices) to

the Internet to help unlock efficiencies by monitoring and controlling the connected physical devices, securely, at any time, from anywhere, and by anyone on any device.

How can we apply IoT to unlock new efficiencies at fueling sites? Here's an example: Operators can use IoT to remotely monitor the fuel level in a tank via a probe and a connected automatic tank gauge (ATG), such as the TLS-450PLUS, to perform an automated task like ordering a fuel delivery when the tank level is low. There are a multitude of operational efficiencies and benefits that a connected ATG can unlock as shown in the mind map below.

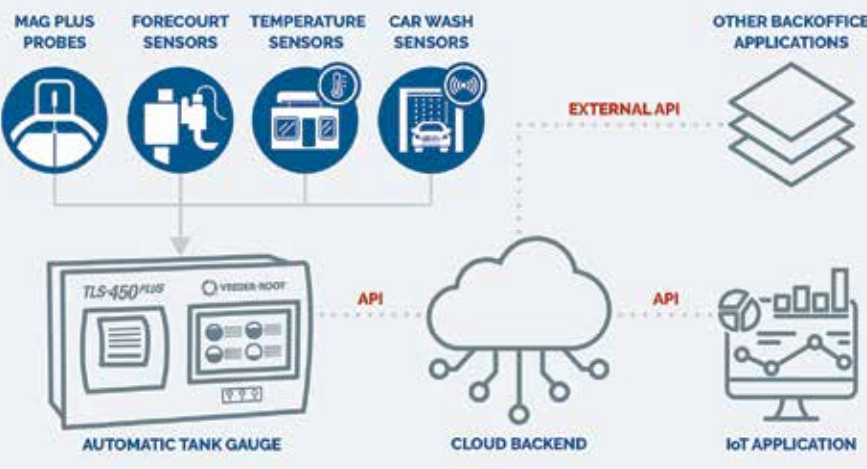


Whether you're developing an in-house IoT application or integrating with an Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) IoT solution, there are four major components to consider:

1. A device that gathers data about a physical condition or event through one or more sensors.
2. A modem or gateway hub that transmits this data to the Internet.
3. A cloud/on-premise backend server which performs multiple energy intensive operations, such as data storage and analytics to transform the data into information.
4. A front-end application also commonly known as a "dashboard" that visualizes actionable information.

The software within each component of the ecosystem illustrated above communicates via an Application Programming Interface (API). A simple way to describe an API is like a waiter at a restaurant taking orders back and forth between the customers and the kitchen. Since an API is the standard means for software to communicate, it is important that the IoT solution has external facing APIs to allow for integrations to other back-office systems within the value chain.

For example, an integration between a ticketing platform and the Veeder-Root IoT solution will allow for automated service ticket generation when a new alarm is generated by the ATG. The data is communicated via an API in real-time to the ticketing platform for resolution. This example relates to automating the alarm management and resolution process, and the same can be applied to automating inventory management and compliance >>




management, among others.

Although daunting, advancements and growth of various IOT enablement platforms have made the development and maintenance of an in-house solution a feasible option. These enablement platforms can be broadly categorized into three main categories.

- Applications Enablement Platforms provide scalable tools and templates for data storage processing and visualization. They also provide tools for user access management, advanced data analytics, and advanced features such as notification via Short Message Service (SMS).
- Network Connectivity Platforms help

Alternatively, integrating an OEM IoT solution is a feasible option as well. OEMs utilize IoT enablement platforms to develop IoT solutions for the end users of their equipment. By owning the entire ecosystem of hardware and software, OEMs provide IoT solutions that are seamlessly integrated with the hardware and can provide fully encrypted, end-to-end data security, making them a quick and highly scalable alternative to developing an in-house IoT solution.

Regardless of the path, developing an in-house IoT solution or integrating an OEM IoT solution into your value chain will help organizations meet regulatory guidelines, unlock operational efficiencies, improve employee safety, and

increase customer satisfaction, making it an essential part of any growth strategy. 


Prince Philip is passionate about extending the safety and productivity of physical processes through IoT. After some initial work creating remote monitoring services with an instrumentation startup, Prince led the launch and commercialization of an IoT platform at Ametek to enable remote instrument condition monitoring and is currently developing the global IoT strategy for Veeder-Root fuel management solutions. Prince has a master's in electrical engineering from the University of Pittsburgh and an MBA from Carnegie Mellon University.




DEVELOPING AN IN-HOUSE IOT SOLUTION OR INTEGRATING AN OEM IOT SOLUTION INTO YOUR VALUE CHAIN WILL HELP ORGANIZATIONS MEET REGULATORY GUIDELINES,

manage data transfer and connectivity from the edge device to the Application Enablement Platform (AEP). They provide other value-added services such as device management.

- Device Management Platforms ensure the connected IoT devices are functional and updated. They perform remote management of IoT devices including remote provisioning, configuration, diagnostics, and updates.



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Reinforcing Responsible Retailing is Key to Defending our Reputation



ID PLEASE, A TRAINING PROGRAM FOR RETAILERS BY RETAILERS. WE STARTED WITH TOBACCO AND VAPING. IN ANTICIPATION OF SELLING BEVERAGE ALCOHOL IN ONTARIO, WE CREATED A NEW MODULE OF ID PLEASE.

As an industry that sells several age-restricted products, “responsible” is at the core of our reputation. If we want to be known as responsible retailers who are trusted in their communities, we must invest in ensuring that is the case.

The founding members of the CICC understood this very clearly and acted on it. We created ID Please, a training program for retailers by retailers. We started with tobacco and vaping. In anticipation of selling beverage alcohol in Ontario, we created a new module of ID Please: SABR (Selling Alcoholic Beverages Responsibly).

Last week our program received approval from the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO). The course, which costs for CICC retail members \$10 per employee (non-member fee \$19), focuses on selling rather than serving alcohol, ensuring that retail employees are fully prepared for the September 5th launch of retail beverage alcohol sales in convenience stores across Ontario.

This is a significant win for the convenience industry as it shows both government and our customers that we are a responsible community of retailers when it comes to selling age-restricted products. This training translates into an impeccable track record in keeping these products out of the hands of youth.

But we must never take this for granted. Our goal is to work with regulators in other provinces to have the ID Please suite of programs accredited by them. It is an area of focus that falls under one of our strategic priorities which is to build influence via public awareness of the convenience channel and its role in our communities.

In order to have the public’s trust, we need to demonstrate through action that we are responsible retailers.

It is a constant battle as governments often, despite our excellent track record, unfairly target us. Why? Simply because young people come into our stores, and we sell a number of age-restricted products.

We have witnessed this with the federal government’s suggestion that nicotine pouches should be pulled out of convenience stores. There is no evidence or data to support such a proposal, it is simply an easy way to be seen as doing something to address youth access. The evidence is quite clear: youth are accessing these products online from illegal websites where there is no age-gating.

But it is issues like these that reinforce why we need to focus on protecting our track record. All of us have a collective responsibility to ensure that our industry’s brand promise of being responsible retailers is upheld by our frontline staff. As the old adage goes, we are only as strong as our weakest link. **Q**

Anne Kothawala is the founding president & CEO of the Convenience Industry Council of Canada. She is a seasoned association executive with decades of experience in communication and government relations. CICC’s goal is to champion the convenience industry’s role in our communities and work for a business environment where all convenience businesses can succeed.

A Message from the Convenience Industry Council of Canada

Ontario's convenience stores just got a whole lot cooler! Beverage alcohol is now available on our shelves, offering greater convenience and choice to consumers. This achievement is a testament to the dedication and collaboration within our industry. The Convenience Industry Council of Canada has been advocating for this change for years and it's incredibly rewarding to see our collective efforts bring about such a positive shift. We're proud of what we've accomplished together as it will have a lasting impact on the communities we serve.

"This is a milestone for consumers and convenience stores in the province of Ontario," states Anne Kothawala, president and CEO of the Convenience Industry Council of Canada. "It marks

the end of antiquated, prohibition-era rules that have precluded the province's 7,500 convenience stores from responsibly retailing beverage alcohol." As we celebrate this milestone, we're also focused on the future. With Ontario leading the way, we're committed to continuing our work to bring this level of convenience to other provinces across the country.

CICC has launched an online resource guide: Ontario Beverage Alcohol Resource Centre: <https://www.onbeveragealcohol.ca/>. Retailers can find details and quick answers on permissible sale hours, shelf space, advertising, inducements, enforcement, and more. CICC also has an Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario approved training course available. Further information is available at <https://convenience-training.com/courses/id-please-sabr>.



CICC President and CEO Anne Kothawala proudly joined Ontario Premier Doug Ford and Finance Minister Peter Bethlenfalvy at a Collingwood On-the-Run, outfitted and ready to sell beverage alcohol, for an exciting launch day press event.

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What's New



OpenShine to Bring Tommy's Express Car Wash to Canada, with First Location in Brampton, Ontario

The new OpenRoad Group division looks to open more Tommy's Express Car Wash locations in Canada in the next three years

Brampton, Ontario - OpenShine, a new division of OpenRoad Group, is bringing the award-winning Tommy's Express Car Wash franchise to Canada, with the first location set for Brampton, Ontario, opening in summer of 2025. The groundbreaking ceremony took place on June 11, 2024, with key executives from Tommy's Express Car Wash and OpenShine in attendance.

Three additional Ontario-based locations are already in the works – St. Thomas, London, and Waterloo.

"We are excited to be the first to bring Tommy's Express Car Wash to Canada, starting in Ontario," says Christian Tjia, operations manager, OpenShine. "Like our sister company OpenRoad Auto Group, who are leaders in the Canadian automotive retail industry, innovation, customer service, and community building are at the forefront of who we are at OpenShine. There is currently nothing quite like the upscale carwash service in Canada that Tommy's Express Car Wash provides. There is a lot of potential, and we can't wait for customers to get a first look very soon."

With more than 200 locations across the United States, Tommy's Express Car Wash is known as innovators of the modern-day carwash platform, featuring a free-standing carwash tunnel with record-breaking power and processing ability – creating a smarter, cleaner, and greener car wash experience. It was named #7 on the 2023 Professional Car

Wash and Detailing Magazine Top 50 Conveyor Carwashes brands list.

Key Tommy's Express Car Wash highlights include belt conveyors, free vacuums and mat washers (including a first-to-market moulded mat washer), auto-entry via license plate scanners for monthly club members, and special Detail Kits for additional interior cleaning.

"OpenRoad Auto Group is one of Canada's leaders in the automotive industry, and we are pleased to partner with OpenShine to launch Tommy's Express Car Wash in Canada for the very first time," says Ryan Essenburg, president and CIO of Tommy's Car Wash Systems. "Carwash technologies have seen vast advancement in development especially with belt conveyors, app-based club memberships, and high volume processing tunnel speed – all of which sets Tommy's Express Car Wash apart from others."

Tommy's Express Car Wash franchise was founded by parent company Tommy's Car Wash Systems in 2016. The company, a leading provider of modern automatic carwash designs, carwash equipment, and carwash facilities, also owns the renowned Quality Car Wash, which set a world record by washing 3,255 cars in one day.

During the groundbreaking ceremony, Tjia was joined by Ryan, Founder and Chairman Tom Essenburg, and their Tommy's Express team: CEO Alex Lemmen, VP of Development Tim Hammond, Associate Director of Project Development Josiah Jarvis, and Real Estate Operations Manager Nate Smith. In addition, members from OpenRoad's Brampton team, architectural partner Weis/LGA, and construction partner Circon were on-site for the important milestone.

For more information about OpenShine, visit www.openshine.ca.

Introducing The Allied Advantage, Coaching for the Carwash Industry

In the carwash industry, it's common to feel like time slips through our fingers, leaving us unable to spend quality moments with friends and family. We struggle with managing our schedules, finding ourselves overwhelmed and unable to get everything done. The pressure of managing demanding schedules can leave us feeling overwhelmed and exhausted. Achieving professional goals and turning personal dreams into reality often feels like a daunting uphill battle.

Introducing The Allied Advantage, a comprehensive coaching program designed specifically for the carwash industry to address these challenges and redefine your path to professional and personal growth. If you've ever felt the need for more time, support, and clarity, this program is for you. The Allied Advantage helps unlock your full potential through a holistic approach tailored to your individual needs.

Book a FREE discovery call today to see what it's all about!

But what exactly is coaching? Coaching is a collaborative partnership where the coach supports you in identifying your goals, finding clarity on your path, and developing actionable strategies. It's about having someone who listens, understands, and helps you map out the highest leverage next steps. Coaching is not just about setting goals; it's about overcoming obstacles and continuously improving in all aspects of life.

The Allied Advantage is for anyone who wants to achieve more with less stress. Whether you're a business professional, an entrepreneur, or someone yearning to get more from life, this program caters to diverse needs, providing customized strategies for your success.

Don't just take our word for it. Experience it firsthand by scheduling a FREE discovery call. This is not just an introduction but an opportunity to explore how the program can transform your life specifically. Receive the support you need to manage stress, master your mindset, and build the life you've always dreamed of.

Take the first step towards achieving your goals and leading a fulfilled life.

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OPW Clean Energy Solutions Showcasing Latest Technology at Gastech

Senior executives will be available and new cryogenic products will be on display in Booth A360

HAMILTON, OHIO – OPW Clean Energy Solutions, a leading developer and supplier of fluid-handling equipment and systems for use in clean-energy applications, will display several of its latest cryogenic technologies in Booth A360 at the Gastech Exhibition & Conference 2024, which will be held from Sept. 17-20 at the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston, TX.

The products available at the booth include the ACME Model Cryogenic Valve;

the Vacuum Jacketed Pipe (VJP); the RegO HydrOMac LH2 Fueling Nozzle; the CryoMac 4 LNG Fueling Nozzle; and the RegOMac Nozzle Product Suite. These products offer cutting-edge features that ensure efficiency, cost-effective performance, high reliability and maximized safety for the handling and transferring of cryogenic liquids in critical applications.

Several OPW Clean Energy executives will be available to discuss these products, including Chad Thomas, vice president and general manager; Felipe Machado, senior director, SPM hydrogen & cryogenics; Chris Herman, senior product planning/BD manager; Emily Harrell, director of product management; and Mike Fink, director, sales & business development.

OPW, a Dover Company, formed OPW Clean Energy Solutions after acquiring ACME Cryogenics and RegO Products in December 2021. This year, OPW Clean Energy Solutions has made several acquisitions to strengthen its expertise and product portfolio. In July, the company acquired Marshall Excelsior Company and its subsidiaries CPC-Cryolab, BASE Engineering, Inc., and Xanik, all of which serve the compressed and liquified-gas markets. OPW CES also recently acquired Demaco, a provider of vacuum-jacketed piping and other cryogenic equipment for gas producers, and SPS Cryogenics and Special Gas Systems (SPS-SGS), a leading developer of pipeline systems and ancillary equipment for use in cryogenic applications.

Gastech is the largest energy exhibition and conference for natural gas, LNG, hydrogen, climate technologies and AI, energy manufacturing, and low-carbon solutions. Held annually, the global tradeshow features more than 800 exhibitors and 50,000 attendees from 125 countries. It provides a global platform for businesses to showcase the latest strategies and cutting-edge innovation to industry leaders, decision makers and financiers.

For more information about OPW Clean Energy Solutions or its equipment and systems, visit opwces.com.

OPW Vehicle Wash Solutions Launches New WashNow! Online Store

Hamilton, OH – Innovative Control Systems (ICS), part of the OPW Vehicle Wash Solutions business unit, has launched the new WashNow! online store. This new eCommerce solution replaces the previous ePOS product and features a robust, intuitive design and high customizability that helps deliver a frictionless end-user shopping experience.

The WashNow! online store is a web-based online portal that enables vehicle wash owners to simply generate additional revenue by selling wash memberships, single washes, wash books and gift cards. The WashNow! online store offers many features and benefits for vehicle wash owners and their customers, including:

- **Quick, Intuitive Purchasing:** Rapid one-page checkout preloads the checkout page with an item in the cart. This seamlessly enables customers to immediately input background information and finalize purchases efficiently.
- **Unique Linking:** Improves customer navigation and engagement by

directing users to specific pages within the online store, such as account creation, membership portal login, individual product page, add/view cart, checkout.

- **Branded Online Store Domain:** Creates a seamless experience between the existing website and the online store via a distinctive URL.
- **Highly Customizable:** The standard WashNow! online store will be based on one of three demo templates but individual online stores can be built to meet the specific needs of the wash operator.
- **Automated Emails:** The order confirmation email that follows each transaction has an updated, modern design that's branded to the vehicle wash
- **Individual Product Instructions:** This new feature allows dedicated directions within the post-purchase email based on the product(s) purchased. This is useful for products that may require additional setup, such as enabling RFID for wash-club memberships

- **Account Portal:** Customers can create an online account to manage their ICS WashConnect profile with the ability to update the credit card on file, view purchase history, edit vehicle information and cancel wash-club memberships
- **WashConnect:** Integrates directly with WashConnect data, allowing continued use of a familiar platform. This direct connection allows immediate reporting of online sales and customer information while enabling instant updates to store items
- **Selling Online:** The online shopping cart facilitates the purchase of multiple items in a single transaction. It supports a range of products and services, including wash-club memberships, single washes, wash books, gift cards and merchandise

To learn more about the new WashNow! online store and the complete range of vehicle wash equipment and payment systems offered by the companies of OPW Vehicle Wash Solutions, visit opwwww.com. For more information on OPW and its various business units, visit opwglobal.com.

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