

# Convenience & Carwash

MAY/JUNE 2023

 **CANADA**

Convenience & Carwash Canada  
**CELEBRATING 15<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY**

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# CANADA'S

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## INDUSTRY LEADING

- Touchless products
- Packaging
- Car Wash Equipment
- Chemical Monitoring
- Service

TAP & WASH



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## Wow, 15 Years!



This edition celebrates the beginning of the 15th year of publishing *Convenience & Carwash Canada* magazine, a total of 84 editions!

In 2008, when I began my journey of small business ownership, I was met with so much negativity from others in this industry. I heard things like, “who does she think she is? This is a man’s world,” and “she’ll never make it. Nobody will want to work with her.” Well, to those who doubted me, I apologize for proving you wrong. To the many who have supported, encouraged, and helped me along the way, I thank you.

The ending of many of my messages has been, “*your success is my business, and as always, my open-door policy to your valuable feedback remains not only intact but stronger than ever.*”

We are all stronger when we work together, share knowledge and ideas and genuinely care about the other person.

Over these 14 years, we told stories of perseverance, introduced new products and services, and put the spotlight on some of the industry’s iconic pioneers like: Kim Trowbridge, who honored us by being the cover story of our first edition, the original presidents of the regional convenience store associations; we’ve showcased great stores such as GasKing, Winks, and published memorable anniversary stories on some of Canada’s oldest brand names like Parkland, P.D. McLaren, Big Chief, Calgary Co-Op, Federated Co-op, along with many regional stores.

Celebrating special milestones in business is an honor to everyone sharing them; from the anniversary of the underground storage tank to the 50+ years of the petroleum nozzle, we’ve showcased many.

I’ve worked with some great people from across the country, such as the WCSA annual golf tournaments we ran for many years, association evening events, and the wonderful C-Store Expo, where Andrew Klukas and I created an actual convenience store within an exhibition hall that was essentially a trade show. That was a fabulous idea that another company took over.

I hope you enjoy this extraordinary cover story that showcases our big anniversary, and thank the many who have shared their thoughts and insights into my journey.

Of course, my journey and the success of *Convenience & Carwash Canada* magazine would not have been possible without the support of the incredible team of professionals that I have worked with, namely Doug Coates of Edge Advertising, who continues to amaze me with his design skills as he creates such beautiful magazines each and every issue and Angela Altass, our brilliant editor who makes us all look good. I worked with Angela for many years at another publishing company in Toronto before moving to Winnipeg.

Meline Beach, our senior writer, takes on editorials that start as ideas I have and she makes them into stories that captivate everyone. Tania Moffat tackles the Wash Talk articles showcasing some of the country’s most interesting carwashes. And, my printing partner Bob Morris is president of Quantum Graphics. This team of professionals is second to none, and I thank you all.

A magazine wouldn’t be a magazine without the support of our advertisers and many have been supporters from the very first year. Advertising and marketing dollars have always been in short supply and I thank those of you who have entrusted *Convenience & Carwash Canada* magazine to carry your message. To our readers, I hope that you’ve learned from the many great editorials that we’ve produced and that you, along with us, have used this information to grow your business.

Here’s to year 15 and more stories that focus on ingenuity, small towns, national chains doing good things, and everyone working in the convenience, retail petroleum, and carwash industries.

Remember that your success is my business, and as always, 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](mailto:bjjohnstone@convenienceandcarwash.com) or 204-489-4215.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bane".

Brenda Jane Johnstone  
Publisher



## Goodbye to Winter (For Now)

Canadians take winter in stride to the point where consuming frozen treats and beverages on those snowy, cold days is not only no big deal, it's enjoyable.

As Jim Jackson, president of Adept Food and Beverage points out in the *Frozen Beverages Offer Year-Round Profits* article in this issue, no one seems to be able to figure out why frozen beverages work so well in Canada year-round. Maybe it's also the same people you see out on the streets in the middle of January wearing shorts and a winter jacket who consume those frozen slushy drinks or ice cream on a freezing cold day.

If we can enjoy frozen treats in winter, as we head into the warmer months, think about the joy they can bring to people in the middle of summer and make sure you are well stocked for the hazy days ahead and check out the *Canadians Enjoy Tasty Frozen Treats* article in this issue.

After the challenges of the last few years, some business owners are seriously considering their succession plans and options. In this issue's *Dollars & Sense* article, we take a look at *Planning a Business Exit Strategy*. It's startling to think that over \$2 trillion in business assets could change hands within the next decade as three-quarters of small business owners plan to exit their businesses. The article explains the process of developing a succession plan and how these owners are rolling out their plans to sell or find a successor for their businesses.

This issue's cover article is a reflective look at the 15th anniversary of *Convenience & Carwash Canada* magazine. I would like to take a moment to thank our readers, advertisers and every person who has contributed to or written for the magazine. I would especially like to say a shoutout to our fearless leader, Brenda Johnstone, whose dedication to this magazine, and this industry, knows no bounds.

As we celebrate this great anniversary, let's raise a glass – or maybe a frozen beverage – and toast this industry and all the hard-working people in it. Cheers to you!

Angela Altass  
Managing Editor

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By Meline Beach

# The Value of Add-On Services

## Maximizing Revenue and Customer Satisfaction

If you're looking for new and innovative ways to increase foot traffic, enhance revenue, build loyalty, improve customer satisfaction, and expand your competitive advantage, you might want to consider add-on services to your store's existing product and service offering. Add-on services can provide significant value to convenience stores and can include everything from stamps and package delivery and pickup to propane tanks and gift cards. Other options include bulk windshield fluid tanks, air compressors, and pet washes – which we explore further below.

### Windshield Washer Fluid Tanks

The EcoTank is a windshield washer fluid dispenser designed to reduce waste and minimize a negative impact on the environment. Featuring refillable tanks, it eliminates the need for disposable plastic jugs in a cost-effective, convenient, and customizable manner. One complete fill of an EcoTank eliminates up to 60 plastic jugs from landfill.

"EcoTank is located in 19 countries, including Canada, where we aim to help the country achieve its 2030 goals with regards to single-use plastics," says Jordon Francis, co-founder of EcoTank North America. "The tank is equipped with software that is owned and third party audited and measures carbon offset and plastic credits."

Primarily located at gas stations, Francis states that they've installed EcoTank in parking lots at large business locations, parking garages, fleet terminals, and truck terminals, as well as alongside Tesla and ChargePoint charging sites.

Each EcoTank is corporately owned with full responsibility for fluid monitoring and refilling requirements. Customers pay an installation cost that includes a custom wrap design.

"Our main offering with most fuel brands is a revenue share

model," says Francis. "We do offer the option for customers to buy, as well as an amenity model – often used for parking garages or business parking lots. Customers pay a monthly fee for the amenity model."

In terms of return on investment, the payback depends on the flow of traffic at the store. An additional benefit for the retail owner/operator is less waste at their location with fewer plastic jugs clogging garbage or recycling bins. Also, eliminating theft or damage to jugs.

"EcoTank owns its fleet of refill trucks," says Francis. "Since most of our customers are on revenue share, we make sure no EcoTank goes empty."

Installation is quick and easy, with little to no downtime for gas stations. The unit requires 120V and four bolts on a concrete pad.

### Air Inflator Service Combined with Windshield Washer Fluid Tanks

Arctic Blue Inc. offers the market a combination unit featuring an air inflator and windshield washer fluid dispensing unit. Tom White is not only the president of Arctic Blue Inc., but he's also the inventor who designed and created the Easy Flow on Tap windshield washer dispensing unit combined with an air



>>

inflator service as an environmental sustainability project in early 2020.

Easy Flow on Tap achieves significant environmental savings as each system has a capacity of 1,512L of windshield washer fluid, which is equivalent to 416 plastic jugs. Beyond its environmental and customer convenience benefits, White emphasizes additional savings in loss management, time, and manual labour without having to handle skids, boxes, plastic wrapping, and subsequent waste management requirements.

Each unit is outfitted with an Onyx cashless payment solution and a built-in automatic inventory control system that signals fluid levels and refill needs via email notifications to Ultra Clear Canada, a third party with 25 years of national experience, subcontracted for fulfillment purposes.

As part of a pilot project, White has six locations in southern Ontario, at car-washes, gas stations and an automotive repair shop. Based on customer feedback and observations, he's tweaked the nozzle and made the hose smaller and lighter with a straight dispenser that fits better into a vehicle's reservoir and takes only 26 seconds to fill from empty, with zero spillage.

As part of his company's growth initiative, White has partnered with P.D. McLaren Limited, a national liquid handling solutions provider, to discuss further advancements and strategies. Both teams have been working together on further design and assembly improvements.

All that's required is a 32-inch by 46-inch cement pad (same footprint as what used to be a telephone booth) and access to the sun as the Easy Flow on Tap combination dispenser is solar powered (optional 110 Volt) therefore not requiring installation costs or operating expense of electricity – another green initiative and cost-savings opportunity.

"The winter season is peak time for windshield washer fluid while the summer season tends to leverage the air inflator most often," says White. "The Easy Flow on Tap dispensing cube creates year-round traffic."

In terms of investment, White states there are options available, which include a capital cost purchase, lease-to-own or partnership. Depending on use, White believes that the return on investment could be within two years.



### Dog Wash Stations

As pet ownership continues to grow in Canada, with the majority being dogs, having a dog wash station on location represents a value-added service offering for customers.

Evelyn Rutherford, director at Furever Clean Dog Wash promotes the K9000, a robust, low-maintenance, stainless steel dog wash that was originally built in 2005 in Australia by a car-wash expert. The K9000 dispenses three hypoallergenic products and a pet wash disinfectant, as well as a two-speed dryer, and three-part hair filtration system with a non-slip floor. Customized decals to promote company branding can be added free of charge at the time of production.

With over 70 units installed across Canada at various businesses, including gas stations and carwashes, dog washes increase year-round customer traffic.

"A single dog wash can easily bring in a couple of thousand dollars a month – even if only 35 dogs are washed a week," says Rutherford. "Twin machines are becoming even more popular in busy locations. Many of our customers are finding their dog washes so successful that they keep on adding more. Devos Car Wash in Moose Jaw, for instance, has just ordered its third machine for the same site."

"The K9000 can run independently with very minimal oversight and features various payment devices like coin/token/debit/credit/and Apple Pay," says Rutherford. "Price for time, as well as other settings, are completely

configurable by the business owner."

Retail owners are responsible for installation, with the help of detailed specifications, videos, and telephone support for assistance, and can be done by any qualified plumber and electrician. All that is needed is hot and cold water, a drain, and electricity.

"Over the years we have expanded our product line based on our customer

requests," says Rutherford. "We offer a single and twin portable dog wash building for those business owners that do not have space inside to put a dog wash. We also have a variety of pet room accessories and pet treat vending machines."

Rutherford takes pride in the relationships she's established with customers and the advice and support her company offers customers on how to start, market, and expand their business with ebooks and business plans.

With the right research and fit for a location's customer base, add-on services like windshield washer fluid tanks, air inflators, and dog washes can be a valuable way for retailers to differentiate themselves from competitors, attract new customers, and increase revenue. **C**

*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.mlbcmmms.ca](http://www.mlbcmmms.ca).*



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# Canadians Enjoy Tasty Frozen Treats

By Angela Altass



Canada is the largest ice cream consumer during winter months and vanilla is the number one choice when it comes to flavours.



Chapman's new ice cream is peanut, nut and egg free with flavours that include Vanilla Trilogy, Chocolate Lover, Cold Brew Coffee, Cherry Chocolate Truffle, The Only Strawberry, Salty Caramel Crunch, Cookie Jar, and Chocolate & Brownies.



**Whether it's a slush beverage, an ice cream, or other tasty indulgences,** children and adults alike have been coming to convenience stores to purchase frozen treats for years.

According to Statistics Canada, there were 5.46 litres of ice cream available for per person consumption in 2020.

Chapman's, a Canadian company based out of Markdale, Ontario that has been manufacturing ice cream for 50 years, notes that Canadians rank number six in the world when it comes to ice cream consumption, with the average Canadian enjoying close to 4.5 litres of ice cream every year.

Along with their 50th anniversary celebration comes a new look for Chapman's flagship line with the introduction of Markdale Creamery ice cream. All original flavours will be transitioned to the new design by the end of 2023.

"The previous design was over 20 years old," notes Lesya Chapman, marketing manager, Chapman's. "We felt it was time for a refresh so we used an image of the original creamery to tie in both the

new design and our heritage."

Although it has a new look, the company carries on making the same traditional ice cream that Chapman's was making in 1973.

"With this initiative, we proudly celebrate our history and heritage," says Ashley Chapman, chief operating officer, Chapman's. "Community is an important pillar of the Chapman's brand and the new product line name pays homage to our small village of Markdale."

Canada is the largest ice cream consumer during winter months and vanilla is the number one choice when it comes to flavours. As Canadians enjoy single-serve novelties, Chapman's ice cream sandwich machine can produce up to 300 sandwiches a minute or 432,000 sandwiches per day.

"Many people enjoy the synergy between crunch wafers and smooth ice cream," says Ashley. "And, sandwiches are a perfect on-the-go treat with a blend of vanilla and chocolate flavours."

Chapman's is launching a high-end Super Premium Plus ice cream across >>

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Canada this spring. The new ice cream is peanut, nut and egg free with flavours that include Vanilla Trilogy, Chocolate Lover, Cold Brew Coffee, Cherry Chocolate Truffle, The Only Strawberry, Salty Caramel Crunch, Cookie Jar, and Chocolate & Brownies.

“After 50 years of making ice cream, frozen yogurt and water ice products, we are moving into the next level with high end, super premium luxury,” says Lesya. “This is where we plan to compete against Ben & Jerry’s and Haagen Daz and, with strong support behind our brand across Canada, we hope this will be a successful launch.”

The Super Premium Plus ice cream format and size is very popular among convenience stores, says Lesya.

“The small convenient size is perfect for small freezers in convenience stores,” says Lesya. “The flavour range is designed to target main flavour profiles to maximize overall sales and the quality of the product is exceptionally high.”

The majority of Canadians are looking for good value and extraordinary quality, notes Lesya.



**This is a refreshing snack in the warmer months as not only do smoodis taste good but they're also good for you.**



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“That is why we are continuously working on finding new ways to deliver more value to our customers while keeping the best product quality,” says Lesya. “We also see a massive increase in consumer support for Canadian-made goods. We continuously focus on Canadian dairy and other ingredients such as Canadian maple syrup, blueberries, peaches, etc.”

With this in mind, Lesya advises convenience store owners to promote Canadian products and also to promote allergy friendly choices in their frozen treat offerings.

“We are offering great looking freezer clings and we’ve customized various POS graphics for different customers,” notes Lesya.

Frozen carbonated and frozen uncarbonated beverages are treats that continue to remain popular with consumers, notes Jim Jackson, president, Adept Food and Beverage.

“If you don’t have this offer in your store,

I think you’re missing an opportunity,” says Jackson. He says keeping equipment clean and well stocked is the key to success with these products.

Adept Food and Beverage recently launched smoodi in Canada, which Jackson says is an answer to the interest and demand by consumers for better-for-you options.

With smoodi, operators can provide a premium and healthy customer experience, says Adam Sandler, chief revenue officer, smoodi.

“This is a refreshing snack in the warmer months as not only do smoodis taste good but they’re also good for you,” says Sandler. “Two of our more popular products for the spring and summer are Brain Boost: Strawberry, Banana, Blackberry, and Raspberry and Green Energizer: Spinach, Banana, Mango, and Macha. In a few months, we will launch a line of meal replacement smoodis that will continue to be 100 per cent natural, no

sugar added and packed with essential vitamins and nutrients. We will have peanut butter and banana as well as coffee flavours. Both new flavours will include real fruits and veggies and will even have protein included.”

The convenience store chain 7-Eleven is well known for its popular frozen carbonated beverage offering, the Slurpee, and Laurie Smith, director of marketing, communications and digital at 7-Eleven Canada indicates that there are some amazing summer flavours on the way this year, although it was too early at the point of writing this article to provide more specific details on them.

Although Canadians are known for enjoying frozen treats year-round, the summer months and warmer weather naturally encourage higher consumption of these products. Having them well-stocked and available will entice customers to make impulse purchases as the weather gets warmer. **Q**

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# Canada's Vaping Excise Tax: A look at the New Regime

By Tania Moffat

**This past January, Canada toughened its stance** on vaping by applying a punitive excise tax on vape products. While it still costs less to vape than to smoke cigarettes, the tax has strained consumers and stirred up concerns with retailers.

Under the new regulations, manufacturers and importers must be licensed with the Canada Revenue Agency and products must be labeled with an excise stamp as proof that duty has been paid. The tax, already included in the item's price, is applied on e-liquids, disposable vapes, pre-filled systems, and DIY products used to make e-juice at a rate of \$1.00 per two ml/g or fraction thereof for the first 10 ml/g and \$1.00 for every additional 10 ml/g regardless of nicotine content. For example, the cost of 30 ml of e-liquid has increased by \$7.

## **Ramifications for retailers**

Readying stores to implement the new excise tax was not without its challenges. For retailers, it meant clearing out unregulated stock from their shelves by the end of 2022, investing in new inventory, and dealing with supply chain issues.

"Products were unavailable, so at times, we did not have the required inventory. Plus, we had products that needed to be returned or disposed of, adding extra work at each of our locations," says Scott Sibbet, vice president of retail operations for GasKing in Alberta.

While Sibbet feels their sales have shown a modest decline since the excise tax was implemented, Skip Millan, category director at Canco Petroleum in British Columbia, believes the

market has stabilized. "Consumers felt the effects, but the market has settled down, and our sale volumes continue to be healthy," says Millan.

Gino Vecia, vice president of sales at Hasty Market Corp, shares his insight into the issue in Ontario. "Customers realize it was the government that increased the price. Sales are still healthy. Our dollar sales are up because of the tax, but we are also seeing more people entering the store making purchases," he adds.

## **Impacts on consumers**

Although sales have stabilized, some manufacturers and retailers worry that the tax sends mixed messages to consumers and could have adverse farther-reaching effects on the market.

"We are not against taxation but believe vaping should be more affordable than smoking. Health Canada recently recognized that switching to vaping is less harmful than continuing to smoke cigarettes. Adult smokers should be encouraged to switch to vaping, and the price can be a difference maker," says Steve Pinard, vice president of marketing for Imperial Tobacco Canada.

"The federal government, with its new excise tax, not only further increases the overall price of vapour products but also invites the provinces to join the excise duty framework through an excise tax of their own at a matched rate. This means that for the provinces that opt into the harmonized excise tax framework, there will be an additional excise shock to consumers," he adds. >>



Taxation can be a slippery slope. It is a quick cash grab by governments that are not looking at the long-term consequences

Quebec is the only province so far to join the new harmonized excise tax, however British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, Newfoundland and Labrador all had pre-existing provincial vape taxes.

“In Quebec, prices of some vapour products have risen by over \$20, in some cases doubling the costs. I think that adult nicotine consumers will turn to the unregulated and untaxed black market with prices like this. Taxation can be a slippery slope. It is a quick cash grab by governments that are not looking at the long-term consequences like increase in illegal sales and ultimately lower excise revenues,” explains Pinard.

**Other areas of concern**

It's no secret that concerns around youth vaping statistics and pressure from health and special interest groups helped pressure the government into action. Although it is illegal to sell vape products to anyone under the age of 18 anywhere in Canada, underage vaping statistics remain troubling. Teens, by nature, are drawn to experimentation and limiting their access to products is the most effective way to decrease their use. Increased costs to consumers could fuel the contraband market which would make keeping these products out of the hands of teens

even more complex.

Industry insiders are also concerned about a national product ban on flavours, something that a few provincial governments have enacted as another means to discourage youth vaping. This move would have a much more significant impact on the industry.

“With growing regulatory threats, the voice of the convenience industry is crucial in ensuring vapour products remain available in all retail channels, unlike in B.C. and Ontario where vaping products are sold in adult-only locations, providing a disadvantage to convenience stores. By demonstrating they are responsible and doing everything they can to limit youth access to vaping products, retailers can play a big part in limiting over-regulation of this category,” says Pinard.

For now, the sector has stabilized under the new tax regime. Whether it will be an effective measure to reduce youth vaping statistics, have any long-term impact on converting smokers to vaping or even be an overall benefit to society remains to be seen. **Q**

*Tania Moffat is a writer, editor and photographer. You can view her work or contact her at [www.chiccountrylife.com](http://www.chiccountrylife.com).*

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# The Salty Snack Revolution: From Classic to Creative



*Salty snacks have been a staple of the convenience store channel for decades. From potato chips and pretzels to crackers and meat sticks, these treats are a quick fix to satisfy cravings for customers on the go.*

## **Classic Crunch**

Potato chips are by far the most common salty snack, with brands like Old Dutch holding their share of the market. This Canadian potato chip company has been delivering a classic crunch across its chip and corn snacks for over six decades. Customer favourites include Rip-L Original, BBQ, Salt & Vinegar, Ketchup, Ridgies Extra Ketchup, Dutch Crunch Jalapeno & Cheddar and Arriba Nacho.

“Old Dutch chips are a convenient salty snack choice with an abundance of flavour options,” says Matthew Tarko, product marketing manager at Old Dutch Foods Ltd., who works closely with convenience and gas retailers to promote national marketing programs through the execution of point-of-sale and social marketing. “A lot of market research goes into determining the right product mix, flavour trends, and listening to our customers.”

While flavour preferences remain the same across Canada, Old Dutch BBQ potato chips have heightened popularity in Ontario and Quebec. Regarding product innovation, Ridgies Extra Ketchup and Ridgies Extra Salt & Vinegar in 200g and 66g bags, launched earlier this year, have been drawing in rave reviews.

“Our biggest salty snack seller is Old Dutch chips in large bags and small snack bags,” says Denise von Schon, general manager of Gateway Gas Bar & Convenience Store. Located along Highway #8 outside of Riverton, Manitoba, Gateway Gas Bar places its salty snacks near the front counter to help stimulate impulse sales mostly to commuters.

In terms of trends, von Schon believes that people tend to stick with familiar comfort snacks regardless of their healthy profile, however, one relatively newer product on their shelves has been capturing a lot of attention. >>



“TWIGZ has been a huge hit in our store. With four flavour options, they are an incredibly satisfying snack, even for people who were never a fan of pretzels,” says von Schon.

#### A New Twist

Founded in 2019, TWIGZ is a family enterprise based out of Calgary, Alberta. Tagged as “Canada’s Original Craft Pretzels,” TWIGZ is available in four bold flavours and sold in over 4,500 retailers across Canada.

“The convenience store channel is very important to us as it’s the first retail channel that put TWIGZ on the map,” says TWIGZ Co-Founder Mark Brandt, who relies on direct orders and distributors, such as CoreMark, Wallace & Carey, and Sobeys Wholesale to move their product.

One trend that has emerged in the salty snack market is the demand for more unique and exotic flavours. While classic options like salt and vinegar and barbecue will always be popular, many

**Zesty Dill Pickle and Buttery Herb & Garlic, which are TWIGZ customer favourites, followed by Fire Roasted Jalapeno for those who like a little spice.**

customers are now seeking out more adventurous flavour options. This trend has led to the emergence of flavours like Zesty Dill Pickle and Buttery Herb & Garlic, which are TWIGZ customer favourites, followed by Fire Roasted Jalapeno for those who like a little spice. Smooth Cheddar Ranch is the company’s latest flavour innovation that’s reaching its way to the top.

“Even though we’re a small Canadian business, we’re committed to competing with the major brands by offering competitive margins and equal sales support for our c-store retailers,” says Brandt. “In addition, we support retailers by providing promos, and in-store marketing, including easy stack knock-out boxes, shelf wobblers, and clip strips as eye-catching displays, and sampling to help drive sales.”

In terms of product innovation, Brandt remains tight-lipped but offers assurances that his mom, as top chef, is busy working in the kitchen creating an exciting fall SKU.

#### High-Protein

With the growth of the health and wellness industry, there has been an increase in demand for snacks that are not only good for you but also taste great. Innovation in high-protein snacks has been on the rise, with companies introducing new protein products that are delicious and convenient. One high-protein product in convenience stores that has stood the test of time is meat sticks.

The Great Canadian Meat Company has been supplying the convenience store channel with its Authentic Dry Pepperoni sticks since 1992. The Whitby, Ontario-based company has since expanded its product offering to include the largest selection of shelf-stable meat snacks in Canada, featuring pork, beef, chicken, turkey and venison – all sourced within Canada’s borders.

“Great Canadian Meat Company meat snacks are lower in sugar and fat and higher in protein,” says Michael Cronin, executive director of strategy and partnerships at The Great Canadian Meat Company. “More now than ever before, protein is a key driver for many consumers when they’re looking for a snack option.”

“While chips are our best-seller in the salty snack category, meat sticks are a close second amongst our customers, many of whom are construction workers and teens, especially at lunch,” says Thomas Sheehan, owner and operator of Enniskillen General Store. “With a shelf-life of well over a year and a profit margin of 50 per cent, meat sticks are a profitable opportunity. Sometimes we’ll offer multi-buy deals for a better price (known as “buy one, get one” BOGO) to create excitement in the category and drive sales.”

Whether sold as single serve, twin pack, multipack, or bulk pack, Great Canadian Meat Company’s grab-and-go meat sticks occupy a small footprint in the store and are best presented on the counter to help drive impulse sales for hungry customers looking for a healthy and satisfying snack on the go.

#### Plant-Powered

In recent years, customers have demanded healthier salty snack options that are lower in calories, fat, and sugar. As a result, many companies have emerged, offering a different option made with healthier ingredients that contain fewer calories and less fat than traditional snacks. These snacks are often made with alternative ingredients like lentils, chickpeas, and quinoa, and are available in a range of flavours.

Based on his favourite childhood favourite made by his mom, Pokko Founder Sasha Rajamani launched his rice and chickpea-based chips. This crunchy recipe uses Canadian



**“With a shelf-life of well over a year and a profit margin of 50 per cent, meat sticks are a profitable opportunity.**

ingredients and authentic flavouring, including Kashmiri chili peppers imported from India, where his parents were born. The vegan product, free from trans fats and cholesterol, boasts a high source of fibre, iron, and OMEGA-6 and OMEGA-3 polyunsaturates. Even its chili peppers are an excellent source of vitamin C.

“We take pride in bringing an innovative chip to the market,” says Rajamani. “We are different in shape, texture, crunch, and I’d argue most importantly our flavour. In such a saturated chip market, we wanted to introduce a refreshing spin to a chip.”

While still in its infancy, the company debuted with a soft launch in 2021, Pokko chips come in two flavours, Original and Spicy, and are sold in 120g and 45g sized bags at select retailers.

“With each account listing, I want it to be a win-win,” says Rajamani. “Once we strategically choose which accounts to be listed in, I want to demonstrate that we have the resources to support them in growing in-store sales, whether that’s

price promotions, sampling, a flyer spot, and brand awareness through our social media platforms. It will be a customized approach for each account.”

Rajamani adds that they’re already working towards bringing a new flavour in 2024, but for now, are focusing on spreading the love with their existing flavours.

Whether customers are looking for classic options like potato chips and pretzels, or more unique and exotic flavours, there are plenty of options available to satisfy their cravings as salty snack manufacturers are constantly innovating and adapting to meet the changing needs of their customers. **■**

*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](http://www.mlbcomms.ca).*



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By Angela Altass

# Frozen Beverages Offer Year-Round Profits

**Cold and frozen beverages** play an important role in the success of foodservice programs at convenience stores.

Foodservice is the largest growing category in the convenience store market and cold beverages are a large part of that offering, says Chris Midbo, sales, marketing and new business development, Western Refrigeration, adding that fountain drink and frozen carbonated beverage (FCB) slush are important to the profitability and success of any c-store foodservice offering.

“Both fountain and slush offer a much higher profit margin in comparison to packaged or bottled beverages,” says Midbo, noting that stores can easily tie dispensed beverages into food combo offerings, such as a sandwich, chips and drink combination. “The lower costing of the dispensed drink allows the combo price to be a lower, more attractive offer while still maintaining a higher profit margin.”

There are a variety of options available to choose from in the cold or frozen beverage equipment market and working with the right supplier can be a deciding factor.

“When making an equipment decision, make sure the equipment can be supported long term, says Midbo. “At Western Refrigeration, we make sure the equipment we supply is fully supported. We hold national service classes for our service providers to ensure our equipment in the field can be supported and has longevity. This includes parts supply and preventative maintenance programs. We also offer delivery, installation and training for the systems we supply, including the backroom syrup supply system.”

The biggest change to take place in cold or frozen beverage equipment over the years involves the different types of units available, says Midbo.

“In FCB slush, we can offer combinations of two, three, and four flavour



**“WHEN MAKING AN EQUIPMENT DECISION, MAKE SURE THE EQUIPMENT CAN BE SUPPORTED LONG TERM, SAYS MIDBO.”**

>>



**THE FOUNTAIN UNITS, THERE ARE MANY FLAVOUR OPTIONS AND SIZES SO WE CAN REALLY FIT THE LOCATION'S SPACE WELL. THERE ARE SIX, EIGHT, 10, 12 AND UP FLAVOUR OPTIONS AS WELL AS THE ABILITY TO OFFER MANY FLAVOUR OPTIONS FROM A VERY SMALL FOOTPRINT.**

units; floor or countertop,” says Midbo. “With the new designs, the bag in box (BIB) syrups can be placed in the stand the unit sits on, freeing up backroom storage space and long syrup line runs.”

Slush units are now designed to minimize maintenance and power, says Midbo.

“The units no longer have belts or pulleys and are all front serviceable,” states Midbo. “The slush units are sealed so less cleaning is required. Cleaning is only needed twice a year. The power requirement has also been decreased from 50 amps to 30 amps, which lowers energy costs. As for the fountain units, there are many flavour options and sizes so we can really fit the location’s space well. There are six, eight, 10, 12 and up flavour options as well as the ability to offer many flavour options from a very small footprint. The dispensing valves are also much better in maintaining a proper product quality with less maintenance required.”

Nitro coffee, a cold coffee brew infused with nitrogen, is one of the newest trends in cold drinks, says Midbo.

“Nitro coffee has a phenomenal and lingering aftertaste,” states Midbo. “It makes your beverage frothy, which gives the perception of a sweet beverage without sugar being added. The nitrogen gas, which is colourless and odourless, hits different places of your tongue, bringing out all the flavours.”

Historically, convenience stores have been big purveyors of cold and frozen beverages, especially in Canada, notes Jim Jackson, president, Adept Food and Beverage.

“They sell more Slurpees at 7-Eleven in Winnipeg in January than they sell in sunny California in the summer,” says Jackson. “None of us have ever been able to figure out why frozen beverages work so well, particularly in Western Canada, year-round. The popularity of certain types of beverages has ebbed and flowed over the years but the constant has been

a regular demand for these types of frozen beverages.”

Frozen carbonated (FCB) and frozen uncarbonated (FUB) beverages often get lumped together as slush, notes Jackson.

“From our perspective, FCB is a product on its own,” says Jackson. “Slurpee, from 7-Eleven, is a brand that most consumers would recognize. The only other competing brand on the FUB side would be SLUSH PUPPIE. Most of the chain convenience stores promote their own brands. Even with some of our products, nobody knows they’re our products because they’re called by whatever the chain is calling them.”

However, frozen beverages are an impulse purchase and Jackson doesn’t think brand recognition is a key factor.

“I believe that if a mom pulls up at a gas bar with her child and the child wants a slushie drink and it’s available inside, she’s going in to get it, no matter what brand it is,” says Jackson. “It is largely impulse and as long as the equipment is operating and it’s clean, that’s about the best that you can do for that offering. The machines need to be full and they need to be clean. I have never been convinced that more than that is necessary. If you keep the equipment clean and make sure the supplies are in place and you are paying attention to the machine over the course of the day, then that’s the baseline.”

Ice cappuccino beverages continue to be a strong offer but should be segregated from FCB slushie offerings, states Jackson.



**AS THE FIRST AUTOMATIC, SELF-SERVING AND HEALTHY SMOOTHIE STORE IN A BOX, SMOODI IS LEVERAGING THE POWER OF AUTOMATION AND ROBOTICS TO EMPOWER HEALTHY HABITS**

“We’ve always called iced cappuccinos and smoothies the adult offer, while the FCB or bright coloured slush is the children’s offer,” says Jackson. “We have always suggested that adult offers be physically situated near the coffee offer in the store. Operationally, it’s easier to control cups if they are separate from the slush offer because the per ounce cost on the adult offers are significantly higher than they are for the slush items. You don’t want someone getting a 32-ounce cup from the FCB side and filling it with iced cappuccino.”

Adept Food and Beverage launched smoodi, a robotic smart blender that creates natural, vegan smoothies with no sugar added, during the recent Restaurant Canada show in Toronto, Ontario.

“We are excited about smoodi because it is a higher end alternative to what already exists out there,” says Jackson. “For us, smoodi is the answer to the interest and demand for better-for-you products as smoodi says they are encouraging healthier habits and better nutrition. We think this offer is going to have a strong

place in Canada. How strong a place in convenience in this country is still up in the air as it’s not an inexpensive offer but certainly in the United States they are busy putting smoodi machines into convenience locations. We expect there will be some convenience distribution in Canada but it will also be in universities, airports and other places like that.”

As the first automatic, self-serving and healthy smoothie store in a box, smoodi is leveraging the power of automation and robotics to empower healthy habits, allowing convenience stores to offer 100 per cent natural smoothies at an affordable price that requires zero labour or maintenance, says Adam Sandler, chief revenue officer, smoodi.

With or without carbonation, frozen beverages can add to a store’s profits year-round by providing refreshment to customers of all ages.

“If you don’t have any frozen beverage offerings in your store, you are missing out and you are potentially not as convenient for your customers as you might otherwise be,” notes Jackson. **□**

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# Easy Flow on Tap: An Eco- and Wallet-Friendly Way to Buy Windshield Washer Fluid

By Gretchen Matthews



**See a problem, find an innovative solution.** That's what Tom White did in the winter of 2019. Having just returned to Ontario after a four-year adventure in Antigua and Barbuda, Caribbean Islands, as owner-operator of Sea Escape Glass Bottom Boat Tours, White visited his local gas station to fill his truck reservoir with windshield wiper fluid and had a poor experience. Rather than let the moment go, he decided to make things better for consumers. Today, White is the president of Arctic Blue Inc. and the inventor and creator of Easy Flow on Tap, the latest development in windshield wiper fluid delivery.

## An Innovative Dispenser

Tom White recognized that traditional methods of dispensing wiper fluid create large amounts of plastic waste via empty jugs that aren't always recycled. He visualized an easy-to-follow touch screen POS system attached to a large tank from which consumers could refill their vehicle's reservoir or a travel jug. He built a plywood prototype in his basement, and in a few months' time, began sourcing materials from within Canada and around the world to create the Easy Flow on Tap Cube. The cube's built-in tire inflator service seemed a natural add-on

in the development process.

"One of the principal challenges to move forward was the volume," he says. "There were some competitors out there, but the volume and capacity of the units wasn't sufficient for what I thought would be a viable business case." His original design was equal to 50 jugs. Once "super-sized," Easy Flow on Tap dispensers grew to their current capacity, holding 1,512 liters, reducing the equivalent of 416 plastic jugs, 104 cardboard cartons and two wooden skids, with every refill.

From the manufacturer to the landfill, a typical jug is handled 10 times. "With this pioneering or innovative method, [the fluid is] not handled at all," he says. "The customer pulls up and dispenses the fluid directly into the vehicle reservoir or travel container on the handy refill station, and there's no spillage, no plastic. It's a really good, convenient product delivery system for everybody, and the only one that really loses is the guy that makes the plastic jug."

## Conscientious Growth

Easy Flow on Tap has grown quickly. In the last year, White has installed six dispensers in the greater Ontario area. Ultra Clear National supplies the washer fluid, Nayax device provides the POS system, and White's team handles any maintenance concerns. White is considering a rewards system, cooperative marketing campaigns, and other incentives to attract consumers and retailers.

This summer, White's Team will build 21 more dispensers at his 800 square foot R&D space in Bowmanville. Meanwhile, he's busy collecting data from existing sites to make sure the cubes are performing optimally before producing dozens. He says, "It easier to tweak six machines than to tweak 60 or more." He adds with a

chuckle, "It's perfect now, but it's only perfect until the next change. You're always looking for continuous improvement."

As part of his growth initiative, White met with P.D. McLaren Limited, a national liquid handling solutions provider, to discuss further advancements and strategies. The teams have been working together on further design and assembly improvements over the past weeks. P.D. McLaren Limited has partnered with Arctic Blue to manufacture, distribute and support the Easy Flow on Tap dispensers. "It seems like a logical fit for our current product lines," says Jason Quin, operations manager for Eastern Canada. "The simple design and execution of dispensing washer fluid was well planned. Tom has put a robust product together that is easy to use and better for the environment." To learn more about P.D. McLaren Limited go to [www.pdmclaren.com](http://www.pdmclaren.com) or reach out to [sales@pdmclaren.com](mailto:sales@pdmclaren.com).



## Benefitting Consumers and Retailers

It costs \$4.95 Canadian to fill a vehicle's reservoir or reusable jug with windshield wiper fluid from an Easy Flow on Tap Cube, compared to \$6.99 for a jug from an Ontario Shell gas station. The Easy Flow on Tap service also includes five minutes of air for tire inflation. After installing a dispenser, retailers can

expect increased revenue on windshield wiper fluid sales, the elimination of hassles associated with jug management including theft, and reclaimed sales floor space to repurpose for other items. White believes they will also experience increased customer satisfaction. He shared these testimonials:

*This is a world changer! Not only is this fill-up machine convenient while on the road traveling with my family but to know I'm also helping the world evolve into a greener world by simple actions like not purchasing more plastic... makes me happy & proud! Thank you for the fast convenience and healthier planet! – **Brittany W.***

*Convenient, efficient, and reducing plastic waste? Yes please! As I was filling up on gas, I saw this really neat looking machine and had to explore. I quickly realized that it was a washer fluid pump! All this time I have been spilling all over my hood because I have misplaced my funnel and was throwing away jug after jug... A complete inconvenience and seeing the*



*empty light always made my eyes roll. With this machine you swipe your card, fill up your fluid tank and away you go! After driving away, I got to thinking. We are ending the year of 2022, and this is the first time I am seeing one of these around. How? I truly believe this should be mandatory for all gas stations so we can all do our part of eliminating plastic and bettering the world for our children and theirs! It all starts somewhere. Everybody needs to check these out, and to the owner of these machines, thank you. – Sincerely, one satisfied customer, **Chantel W.***

#### **A Glowing Present and a Bright Future**

The Easy Flow on Tap Cube includes an anti-vandalism enclosure, weatherproof design, and canopy lighting for customer convenience. It emits a welcoming blue glow and is nearly transparent so retailers and customers can see how much fluid remains. AI monitoring software predicts and schedules refills.

Innovation requires discovery, aspiration, evolution, scaling, and perspiration. In the last four years, Tom White has demonstrated these essential attributes to create a commendable, environmentally responsible product that is a boon for the vehicle transportation industry.

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# Dollars & Sense

## Planning a Business Exit Strategy

By Angela Altass

Over \$2 trillion in business assets could change hands within the next decade as over three-quarters, or 76 per cent, of small business owners are planning to exit their business, according to *Succession Tsunami*, a new report by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB).

**The most common obstacle for success planning** for half, or 54 per cent, of small business owners is finding a suitable buyer or a successor, states the CFIB report, noting that nearly half, or 43 per cent, of owners are struggling to measure the value of their business, while 39 per cent say the business is too reliant on them for day-to-day operations.

The report also indicates that the pandemic affected owners' exit timelines with nearly four in 10 owners having changed their business exit dates as 17 per cent accelerated their timeline, often as a result of stress, and 22 per cent delayed it by at least one year, often because they have incurred too much debt or the value of their business had gone down too much during the pandemic.

"Planning an exit strategy or succession plan is crucial for securing both your future and that of your legacy and it is advisable to begin this process as early as possible," says CFIB Economist Laure-Anna Bomal, who is one of the authors of the report. "Having a well thought out plan in place helps to ensure a smooth transition when the time comes to sell or transfer ownership."

The process of developing a succession plan typically takes several years to complete, states Bomal, adding that several phases are involved, such as:

- **Business sale readiness:** This phase takes 12-24 months and involves formalizing the business to be ready for sale,

including activities such as business valuation, bookkeeping, and developing a seller plan.

- **Engaging the buyer:** This phase takes six to 12 months and involves engaging potential buyers to assess their interest in the business. Activities during this phase may include negotiating with potential buyers and tax planning for the seller.
- **Due diligence:** This phase takes one to 12 months and involves drawing up an agreement and timelines for the sale.
- **Financing:** This phase takes one to 12 months and involves locking down buyer financing. This may include activities such as developing a buyer's business plan, securing financing partners, and finalizing arrangements.
- **Transition:** This phase takes zero to 60 months and involves managing the transition of ownership and leadership, including mentorship and transition planning for corporate knowledge and authority relationships.

"It involves evaluating the company's vision and growth plans, identifying and grooming potential successors, developing a plan for transferring ownership and leadership, and addressing any potential issues or challenges that may arise," says Bomal. "CFIB has a partnership with Succession Matching that offers assistance with succession planning. The recommended timeline for this process is typically



between two and seven years, according to Succession Matching.”

With a CFIB membership, business owners get 50 per cent off a formal succession planning program and a free one-year membership with Succession Matching. As an online community of business buyers, sellers, and succession planning professionals, SuccessionMatching.com provides access to resources and connection with members and partners to assist in transitioning a business. Succession Matching is a two-sided marketplace that uses a unique algorithm to match business owners looking to sell with entrepreneurs looking to buy.

“Throughout the several years required for the succession planning process, business owners will require bookkeeping, accounting, legal support, and valuating at different stages,” says Bomal. “To assist businesses with succession planning, CFIB has developed a range of free tools, including a website ([www.cfib-fcei.ca/succession](http://www.cfib-fcei.ca/succession)), webinars, and checklists. While some owners may feel capable of managing the process themselves, seeking the help of an advisor can be an option for a smooth exit and transition to the next stage of their life.”

Succession plans can either be informal or formal, with formal plans providing more benefits than informal ones, says Bomal.

“Formal plans outline the process and schedule for the owner’s withdrawal, including legal and supporting documents,” says Bomal. “They involve input from various advisors, such as accountants and legal professionals, to address financial, tax, and legal considerations, including the mechanics for the transfer, a process for resolving disputes, and a timetable. On the other hand, not having a structured plan can be a source of anxiety and uncertainty.”

Based on the CFIB report, which is available at [www.cfib-fcei.ca](http://www.cfib-fcei.ca), business owners with formal written plans feel more confident about a successful exit process, with 91 per cent feeling confident compared to 82 per cent for informal unwritten plans and 59 per cent for those without a plan.

“If time allows, business owners should seek recommendations for advisors from trusted associates, interview three or four, and choose the most comfortable and trustworthy person to handle their finances,” states Bomal.

In the CFIB report, retirement, at 75 per cent, is cited as the top reason business owners are leaving their business, while 22 per cent are burned out and 21

per cent want to step back from their responsibilities as owners. However, only one in 10 business owners, or nine per cent, have a formal business plan in place.

“It’s essential for business owners to have a well-planned exit strategy,” says Corinne Pohlmann, senior vice-president of national affairs at CFIB. “Planning for business succession is a key factor in ensuring that Canada continues to have a healthy small business community.”

A majority of owners rely on the sale of their businesses to fund their retirement, notes Bomal. The CFIB report indicates that 49 per cent of owners will sell their business to an unrelated buyer, while 24 per cent will sell to a family member and 23 per cent to their employees.

“If they can’t sell their business, they’ll have to delay their retirement,” says Bomal. “That adds another stress to the owner, their family and employees.”

The CFIB report shows that 43 per cent of business owners reach out to accountants to help them develop a succession plan, while 24 per cent work with lawyers and about two in five owners, or 39 per cent, rely solely on themselves to develop a plan.

“It doesn’t matter whether you are planning to transition in the next year, two years, or 20 years, a succession plan is the foundation for that transition,” says Alison Anderson, founder and CEO of Succession Matching. “Most deals break down during the negotiation because business owners are not actually ready on paper to transition their business.” ■

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# New Technologies in Carwash Doors



**PNEUMATIC OPENERS REVOLUTIONIZED THE CARWASH MARKET BY UTILIZING AN OPENER THAT COULD WITHSTAND THE EXCESSIVE WATER AND CHEMICAL SPRAY FROM THE CARWASH PROCESS.**

**As we all know, change is inevitable.** The world of carwash doors and openers is no different. Over the years we have seen trends change significantly. Going way back to the early years of carwash doors, there really wasn't any products designed specifically for the carwash market. That means that standard products that were designed for dry warehouse environments were being used in carwashes as well. This typically consisted of steel insulated doors operated by an off the shelf electric opener.

It was quickly realized that these products were not holding up in the harsh carwash environment. Therefore, the pneumatic opener was introduced to the market. Pneumatic openers revolutionized the carwash market by utilizing an opener that could withstand the excessive water and chemical spray from the carwash process. Constructed of corrosion resistant components these pneumatic openers not only outperformed electric openers, but would last much longer before needing to be replaced. They also increased the speed of the typical door by up to three times that of the standard electric opener.

Although pneumatic openers drastically improved the opening and closing efficiencies for overhead doors, the increased speeds and increased cycle capabilities was outperforming the doors. Steel insulated doors would absorb the water from the wash and would drastically increase in weight. The additional weight and lack of corrosion resistant materials led to doors breaking and falling apart in a quicker timeframe.

This led to the next big improvement in carwash doors, which was the introduction of the polycarbonate door. Polycarbonate doors are constructed of lightweight polycarbonate and aluminum. The doors were designed with sloped rails to shed water from the door and were packaged with hardware materials such as stainless steel, plastic, and aluminum.

For years the polycarbonate door packaged with a pneumatic opener was the staple in the carwash market. Over the years, multiple improvements have been made to both the polycarbonate door and pneumatic openers and this pairing continues to be a great option for your carwash door needs.

However, the introduction of the high speed vinyl roll up doors to the market has given us more options when considering the best door and opener for your application. Vinyl doors are designed with all corrosion resistant options so they are a viable option in all carwashes. They operate at high speeds and offer a breakaway feature that is unavailable with the polycarbonate overhead door which has led many to start using this option over the overhead door style. >>



The trend to vinyl roll up doors has also brought a re-introduction of the electric opener in the carwash market. Technology and engineering have given us new options with electric openers that were not available in the early days of carwashing. These new electric openers are designed for use in corrosive environments. Some of these improvements include sealed motors, coated internal windings, and Nema 4X rated control panels.

The improvements and advancements of the electric opener has made it a viable

option for overhead polycarbonate doors as well. Like most products, there are many options available when choosing to go with an electric opener. Most of the options available are determined by selecting your control package option. What type of wash you are operating as well as the capabilities of your carwash equipment will determine what type of control options you should choose. Be sure to discuss with the product manufacturer or your distributor to see what is best for your application. **■**

Some of the new technologies that are available with electric openers include:

- **Eliminating the need for cam switches on the gearhead:** By using an encoder mounted on the shaft the opener can sync with the door by tracking the revolutions of the shaft. This allows for setting of the door open and close limits through the control panel rather than physically setting the door travel limits. This feature improves accuracy in the door travel and saves time and effort in the installation and set-up process.
- **Individual open and close travel speed adjustment:** This feature allows you to set the open and close travel speeds independently. Most people want their doors to open at a fast speed to allow vehicles into the bay, but want to slow down the close travel speed for safety purposes. You can also set a cushion stop on open and close so your door will reduce speeds for the last 12 inches of travel to avoid slamming at the header or on the floor.
- **Touch screen capability:** New control panels have abilities to view or change settings by utilizing a touch screen built into the face of the control panel. Now you can easily change limits or settings of your opener without opening the box or using any tools to accomplish your tasks.
- **Self diagnostic features:** New technologies with variable frequency drives gives you the capability to monitor inputs and diagnose problems with the door opener. Simple codes transmitted to the control panel screen can tell you if you have a problem with photo eyes, carwash inputs, or even mechanical load errors.
- **Time of day operation:** You can easily program your doors to operate at specific times of the day. Designate hours of operation for your wash and program

your controller to have the doors only operate during open hours.

- **Built in closing timers:** You can activate the feature to have your door close automatically after each car by utilizing the closing timer feature.
- **Temperature control settings:** Program your control panel to have your doors held open if the outside temperature reaches a determined temperature. If the temp drops below the designated temp it would automatically put your doors back into operating mode.
- **Battery backup:** Have an emergency exit option in case of power failure. Add a battery backup to the system to allow customers to open the door if they become trapped in a bay with loss of power at the location.
- **Remote monitoring:** Do you want to be able to monitor your doors or bay temp from a remote location? You can choose a control package that will allow you to view the position of your doors, your internal bay temperature, or any error codes associated with your opener. This can be set up to send you alerts as well if your doors are not operating properly or if your bay temperature drops below a certain temp.

These are a few of the advancements in technology that are available on some of the new electric openers. It is important to note that there are varying levels of control options associated with the new style electric openers. Be sure discuss with either the product manufacturer or your distributor to get a control package that best suits your needs. **■**

*Josh Hart has been with Airlift Doors, Inc. for 23 years. He has held positions in production, service and installation, and sales. He spent the majority of his career with Airlift in sales prior to taking over as company president in 2014.*



XRS & Alaska polycarbonate door electric opener

# A Labour of Love – Convenience & Carwash Canada Celebrates 15 Years



SEPT-OCT  
2008 ISSUE



MAR/APR  
2023 ISSUE



**Brenda Johnstone**  
Publisher

BY Meline Beach

A dash of curiosity, a sprinkle of resilience, and a load of determination and tenacity is Brenda Johnstone's recipe for success with the introduction of *Convenience & Carwash Canada* magazine, launched in June 2008.

**That year, American swimmer** Michael Phelps and Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt dominated the Beijing Summer Olympics; Canadians voted for the Conservative party, which led by a minority government; Barack Obama made history with his victorious win in U.S. politics; and Coldplay released its first number one hit in the U.S. and Grammy Song of the Year with "Viva La Vida" – which, in Spanish, is an expression of "Long Live Life".

"Long Live Life" – a fitting term for Brenda's journey as an employee to publisher, producer, entrepreneur, and trailblazer. Not one to sit idle, Brenda has accomplished many great things since the launch of this magazine and forged too many-to-count positive working relationships-turned-friendships along the way. Read on to learn of her journey as we celebrate the magazine's 15th anniversary.

## Mission and Motivation

"I had been working within the publishing industry for many years and gained a vast amount of knowledge, including production and print processes," says Brenda, whose husband owned a printing company in Toronto at the time. "I worked at a small publisher in Toronto where I sold advertising space and design work. My first big account was a government contract that those that I worked for at the time "allowed" me to go pitch. That was in the days of storyboards where you stood at the front of a room and talked about what we can do for you while presenting a series of messages that mapped out the concept. In another scenario, I had done cold-calling about design projects and this woman said they were looking for a new company to do creative work. So, off I went >>

# 15

"I can't believe *Convenience & Carwash Canada* is 15 years old! I vividly remember Brenda starting this venture from scratch. Her creative and innovative ideas have always been extremely helpful in guiding our business in the right direction. Congratulations Brenda on your 15th anniversary."

**CHRIS VASSOS** *president*  
*WALECO Inc.*

"Brenda is a strong advocate for the convenience store and carwash industry and always includes topics that are relevant to our business. Congratulations on the 15th anniversary of *Convenience & Carwash Canada* – it couldn't happen to a more deserving person."

**BRENT MORRIS**  
*Gas King Oil Co. Ltd.*

"What an accomplishment! Congratulations to you and your team, Brenda. We are proud to circulate your magazine, which offers insights and relevant industry news, to our 3,000 retail outlets year-round. We congratulate you and your team for this milestone of 15 years in business. Many more to come, I am sure."

**STEPHANE BOUCHARD**  
*vice president, Distribution Regitan.*

"Like any of us, Brenda has had many struggles in business over the years – economic downturns, pesky competitors, and pandemics, but this sole proprietor-determined woman continued to turn out one of the most successful magazines in the business today. It is truly my honour to know Brenda and watch her prove how a successful woman can be. Congratulations to you and *Convenience & Carwash Canada*."

**Ian Burton**  
*North American director of sales,*  
*Istobal.*



May/June 2016 issue

"I wanted to publish a better magazine that provides readers with the information they could use to grow their business."

on a wing and a prayer, made my pitch, hit it off, and landed the contract."

After years of working for someone else, Brenda felt she could do better and set off to "steer her own ship."

"I wanted to publish a better magazine that provides readers with the information they could use to grow their business."

She took her savings and began the journey of creating a publication that would inspire retailers to do better in operating their stores and offering their customers the best product and services they could.

Her mission has served Yvon Bourgeois of YB Sales Inc. well. Yvon has been advertising in *Convenience & Carwash Canada* since the launch of 5-Hour Energy in Canada many years ago.

"*Convenience & Carwash Canada* is our go-to magazine to let our customers know what new flavours or new products we are launching in Canada," says Yvon. "Brenda has helped us launch new products, raise brand awareness and generate sales."

### Evolution since Inception

"When I launched *Convenience & Carwash Canada* my vision was to offer the industry a publication that was second to none. We began by offering people in-depth articles about hot topics such as tobacco, new laws and regulations, labour relations, and technology," says Brenda. The magazine quickly became a trusted source of information on sometimes controversial topics, often contributed by key industry professionals and subject matter experts – published in both digital copy and print on a bi-monthly basis. "As I became more entrenched in both petroleum and carwash, I decided to offer more in-depth topics in this area and developed our Forecourt



Top: January/February 2016 issue  
Bottom: January/February 2013 issue

In addition to her great networking skills, part of Brenda's success is also based on her collaborative style.

"When we prepare our editorial schedule each summer for the next edition, I call retailers from across the country and ask them what they'd like to read about or learn in upcoming editions," says Brenda. "By asking readers what they want, I believe that they will have a vested interest in the magazine's content."

Both Doug Coates, a long-time graphic designer, and Angela Altass, writer/editor of *Convenience & Carwash Canada*, share a testament to Brenda's collaborative style.

"Being a member of Design Professionals of Canada I have spoken with other designers and the one thing some have shared that I haven't experienced is design direction being forced from the top down, meaning publishers or editors direct the visual feel of the publication," says Doug, who's designed over 90 issues so far. "In the case of *Convenience & Carwash Canada*, each of us on the team respects the others' area of expertise, not that we don't provide feedback or suggestions. I think it's the collaborative environment that makes it work so well."

Angela concurs: "Brenda and I met when we worked together at another publishing firm in Toronto over 25 years ago. When she reached out to me, as a freelance writer, to write for *Convenience & Carwash Canada*, I was thrilled to reconnect with her again and have been writing for the magazine for over 12 years. I would describe working with Brenda and the team at *Convenience & Carwash Canada* as a very collaborative experience in which it often feels more like a family than just a work relationship."

#### Milestones and Accomplishments

In its earlier years, *Convenience & Carwash Canada* was published in English and Korean, based on a partnership Brenda had established with the Canada Korea Business Association.

"I met wonderful people and even travelled to Korea on a trade mission," says Brenda. "I've got great memories of various people I've worked with and enjoy spotlighting companies that are changing the landscape of the industries in which they work."

Over the years, *Convenience & Carwash Canada* has been recognized with industry accolades, including a gold and silver >>

Insights series that Ed Kammerer covers in every issue.

Brenda met Ed through Darren Wight, who works for Dean Houston & Associates and represents OPW, PDQ, Belanger, and more.

"Through the years, Darren has introduced me to many new companies and has helped educate me on everything from leak detection to carwash success, and so much more," says Brenda.

This type of networking and friendship building is a common occurrence for Brenda. Her friendly and professional disposition makes for a comfortable working relationship – so much so that her roster of advertisers, writers, and designers remain loyal to her and the magazine for many years.

Krista Anderson, founder and chief executive officer of ESSTAR speaks fondly of Brenda for her dedication to supporting her company and its mission through advertising opportunities and industry introductions.

"Brenda has the heart to elevate female founders and their businesses for the greater good of everyone," says Krista, who has benefitted from referrals and new contacts from her involvement with *Convenience & Carwash Canada*. "If you're looking to develop brand recognition or create a path for change, this magazine will help you execute that."

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# 15



September/October 2022 issue



November/December 2019 issue

Canadian Online Publishing (COPA) Award for Best Print & Digital Magazine in Canada for two consecutive years, a Silver COPA for Best Company Feature, and a Best Editorial feature from the Manitoba Publishers Association, as well as a few honourable mentions.

“It is very special to be recognized for the work that we all do,” says Brenda. “I’m not sure anyone knows the work involved in producing a magazine, beyond it showing up in their mailbox. We do what we do. It’s a labour of love.”

The magazine’s greatest impact is, in large part, related to its grass-roots way of doing everything.



January/February 2020 issue

“Brenda is always aware and on top of issues that potentially affect hard-working family-run stores throughout Canada. *Convenience & Carwash Canada* continues to guide and help c-stores and carwashes with up-to-date information, innovation, new products, and education. As advertising priorities continue to shift, the OCSA would always recommend *Convenience & Carwash Canada* to suppliers and industry to ensure we have ongoing communication to help small businesses throughout this country. Congratulations to Brenda from all her friends in the c-store industry for her ongoing drive to make the business better for 1000s of family-run corner stores in Canada.”

**DAVE BRYANS** *chief executive officer, Ontario Convenience Stores Association (OCSA)*

“I congratulate Brenda on her 15 years of excellence. She has raised the bar higher for the industry through her many contributions. Well done!”

**AMY BOUDREAU** *chief executive officer and president, The Yoga Cop Inc.*

“We invite people to write our articles from a hands-on perspective,” says Brenda. “I’ve always believed that those who work hands-on with any product is the expert who should write the articles.”

Take for example Amy Boudreau, chief executive officer and president, of The Yoga Cop Inc., who’s known Brenda since 2017, when she first wrote an article for the magazine on robbery prevention while she was working as a crime prevention officer for a large metropolitan police service at the time.

Amy says, “Through her magazine, Brenda has provided a platform for businesses to stay updated on emerging trends. She takes a cross-sectional approach from different industries to boost readers with tactical strategies and solutions to enhance their business.”

Many industry subject matter experts and dedicated freelance writers to *Convenience & Carwash Canada* cover a range of content from bathroom cleanliness, carwash chemicals, and safety awareness like human trafficking to innovation and technology, environmental awareness, and profitable foodservice solutions – content that convenience, retail petroleum and carwash owners and operators have come to rely on to be informed and educated on industry news, trends, and best practices.

### Challenges and Opportunities

“Price increases with paper and postage are two of my biggest challenges, along with the struggle to raise my advertising rates with limited marketing dollars,” says Brenda. “The pandemic hurt everyone – many independent stores had to close and some were acquired, and many advertisers pulled out because they had to make serious cuts. There were also supply chain issues where suppliers couldn’t get products, such as equipment, and sales

across the whole industry were down, except for convenience stores, as they were deemed essential services. We just kept doing what we do and published smaller editions but added additional editorial topics that focused more on safety and mental health. Thankfully, our readership remains steady with owners and operators of retail petroleum, convenience and carwash sites, coast to coast.”

In her 15 years of running the magazine, Brenda only received one negative message from a disgruntled reader, and that was to let her know how disappointed she was to have found a spelling mistake in that particular edition.

“I laughed at that and sent her a reply thanking her for taking the time to send this message to me,” says Brenda. “I let her know that in all the years of publishing more than 6,000 words per edition, she found one spelling mistake and that I am thankful for loyal readers like her.”

Brenda remains true to herself and others across all her encounters.

“A competitor once told me, when I launched *Convenience & Carwash Canada* magazine, that I’d never make it, that it was a man’s industry and I had no business in this business,” recalls Brenda.

“What I say is, I’m very good at what I do, I work hard, and if you tell me I can’t do something, well, those who know me well would tell you ‘them’s fightin’ words’ to Brenda.”

Paul Romaniuk, operations manager-Alberta for Transchem Group has advertised in *Convenience & Carwash Canada* on many occasions and remains fond of the magazine and his working relationship with Brenda forged over the years.

“Brenda has proven that this industry has incredible leaders in both genders and across all areas,” says Paul. “Her passion for this industry and its advancement comes through in every aspect of the magazine, making *Convenience & Carwash Canada* one of the premier periodicals in this industry.”

Brenda, who’s had to fight stereotypes and naysayers her whole career, is a trailblazer with a few startups to her name, including the semi-annual Women & Carwash Conference. She advises, “Never let anyone tell you you can’t do something when you know you can and you know it’ll be great.”

It’s not surprising that, with her tenacity and determination combined with

a genuine personality, she’s influencing others.

“Recently at an event that I organize, a young woman told me that I inspire her and that she would love it if I would agree to be her mentor. That was something that I never thought about and have since added this to the bottom of my emails... “You may never know that what you do in your everyday life might be the inspiration that someone else needs.”

Small and medium-sized businesses are significant contributors to the Canadian economy, however unfortunately, many don’t survive beyond 10 years. Accolades to Brenda and *Convenience & Carwash Canada* for continuing to survive and thrive the test of time with a growing advertiser base and diverse readership with great editorial content ideas lined up for future editions. 

*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.mlbcmmms.ca](http://www.mlbcmmms.ca).*

**Congratulations  
Brenda and the entire  
team, on the 15<sup>th</sup>  
anniversary edition of  
Convenience & Carwash  
Canada magazine  
from your friends at  
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Ontario and Quebec.**

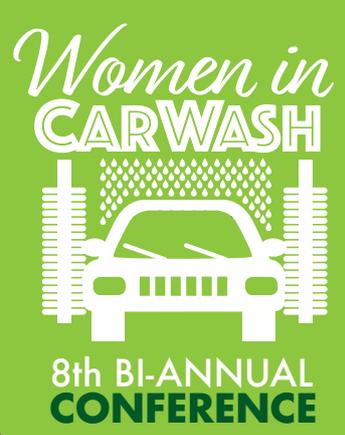
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### Here are some of the testimonials that received from attendees:

**MaryAnne Irvine**

*London Mat*

Personally for me, this conference is "One of a Kind", I loved every moment!

**Gretchen Matthews**

*Chesapeake Quill*

Attendees at these events are consistently engaged and receptive to new ideas.

**Melissa Pirkey**

*Pirkey Insurance*

I enjoy the connection with all different types of leaders- CEO's, Car wash managers, Chemical Reps, and more.

**Fran DeGouveia**

*Just Lubes*

As many of the delegates, I work in a male dominated industry and coming out of a pandemic, it was nice to experience some synergies with these ladies.

**Melanie Sands**

*Red Hill Carwash*

A wonderful and fun way to learn and grow as a person and to improve my business.

**Savannah Brush**

*Welcomemat*

The conference is an opportunity to connect with like-minded women who are experiencing different sides of a booming industry.

**Megan Scheid**

*Tommy Carwash*

This conference exceeded my expectations. The whole event was very well laid out and structures with activities and sessions for both professional and personal development, as well as fun and getting to know each other.





By Valerie Sanchez

# Revving Up Your Marketing Strategy: How Social Media is Transforming the Carwash Industry

**Social media has become an integral part** of modern society and the carwash industry is no exception. As the industry becomes increasingly competitive, carwash businesses are turning to social media as a tool to attract and retain customers. In this article, we will explore the pivotal role that social media integration has in the carwash industry and how businesses can leverage social media to drive success.

One of the primary benefits of social media for carwash businesses is the ability to connect with customers on a personal level. By engaging with customers through social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, carwash businesses can build relationships with customers and foster a sense of community around their brand. Social media allows businesses to showcase their services, share customer testimonials, and offer promotions and discounts to followers.

Moreover, social media can be used to showcase the quality of service offered by the carwash business. By sharing before and after images of carwashes and highlighting the expertise of the staff, businesses can demonstrate their ability to provide high quality services. Social media can also be used to showcase eco-friendly initiatives, such as using biodegradable soaps and water saving technologies, which can appeal to environmentally conscious customers.

In addition to building relationships with customers, social media can also be used to attract new customers. By creating targeted advertisements that appear in the feeds of users who fit the demographic profile of the target customer, businesses can increase their reach and visibility. Social media platforms offer powerful targeting options that allow businesses to target users based on age, location, interests, and other criteria.

Social media can also be used to drive traffic to the business's website. By including links to the website in social media posts, businesses can encourage followers to visit the website and learn more about the services offered. This can lead to increased conversion rates and higher sales.

Another advantage of social media for carwash businesses is the ability to provide excellent customer service. By responding promptly to customer inquiries and complaints on social media, businesses can show customers that they are valued and that their concerns are taken seriously. Social media also offers businesses the opportunity to gather feedback and insights from customers, which can be used to improve the quality of services offered.

Social media can also be used to create brand ambassadors. By incentivizing customers to share their positive experiences with friends and followers on social media, businesses can create a powerful word-of-mouth marketing campaign. This can

lead to increased visibility and new customers for the business.

There are several strategies that carwash businesses can use to integrate social media into their marketing plans. One strategy is to create a social media calendar that outlines the types of posts that will be shared on each platform and the frequency of posting. This can ensure that the business is consistently engaging with followers and sharing relevant content.

Another strategy is to partner with social media influencers. Influencer marketing involves partnering with individuals who have a large following on social media to promote the business. This can include local celebrities, social media influencers, and bloggers who have a significant following among the target customer segments. Influencer marketing can be particularly effective in targeting younger consumers who are more likely to follow social media influencers and rely on their recommendations.

Paid social media advertising can also be a powerful tool for carwash businesses. By creating targeted advertisements that appear in the feeds of users who fit the demographic profile of the target customer, businesses can increase their reach and visibility. Social media platforms offer powerful targeting options that allow businesses to target users based on age, location, interests, and other criteria.

In conclusion, social media integration has become a pivotal tool for carwash businesses. Social media allows businesses to connect with customers on a personal level, showcase the quality of service offered, attract new customers, provide excellent customer service, and create brand ambassadors. By leveraging social media effectively, carwash businesses can increase their visibility, drive sales, and build a strong brand reputation. To be successful in using social media for marketing, carwash businesses must create a comprehensive social media strategy that includes regular posting, targeted advertising, influencer partnerships, and excellent customer service. As the carwash industry continues to evolve and become more competitive, businesses that effectively integrate social media into their marketing plans will be better positioned to succeed and thrive. **□**

*Valerie Sanchez has 25 years of experience as an influential leader who has built a reputation for excellence in service, culture, people, and community. Her focus on operations and event management combined with exemplary customer service has made her an integral part of establishing and optimizing client relationships throughout her career. Currently, Valerie is partner/VP of operations at Wash Brands, LLC - a full-service carwash marketing agency. Previously, she was the marketing and tradeshow manager for Sonny's, The CarWash Factory*

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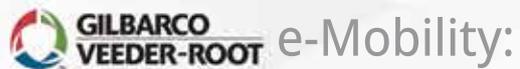
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## Breaking the Ice: Preparation Helps EVs Take on Cold Weather Challenges



EV charging in cold weather

# EV ARTICLE UPDATE

**Electric vehicle charging remains** at the forefront of transportation and infrastructure conversations among government officials, private investors and convenience and carwash owners. The Canadian government and private companies are investing heavily in the development and expansion of EV charging infrastructure across the country to meet the growing demand for electric vehicles. As of April 2023, there were 9,000 EV charging stations in Canada, according to the National Inventory of Canadian Charging & Fueling Stations. This number is expected to increase significantly in the coming years as more public and private organizations continue to invest in charging infrastructure and automobile drivers purchase electric vehicles.

Many people find their stress levels directly correlates to the battery charge level in their EV. “Range anxiety,” or the fear the amount of charge will run out before the driver can reach a charging station or destination, impacts at least a third of all EV owners. Compound this fear with frosty winter weather, and anxiety levels increase in direct proportion to the drop in temperature. This leaves one

wondering, how much does cold weather affect EV battery range?

There is no reason, however, why a person in a colder climate cannot own an EV. Yet perception does not always meet reality when it comes to EVs and freezing temperatures. Time to put a few of these cold weather myths on ice.

**PERCEPTION: ONLY DRIVERS IN MODERATE CLIMATES CAN CONFIDENTLY OWN AN EV**  
**REALITY: EVS ARE POPULAR EVEN IN ARCTIC REGIONS**

While cold and even hot weather extremes will decrease a vehicle’s range, it does not make it inoperable, especially when the owner takes proper precautions to extend battery life. If you do not believe that, tell that to all the EV owners in Norway.

Certainly, more notable for its colder temperatures rather than as a tropical paradise, nearly half of Norway’s land mass lies within the Arctic Circle. Yet electric vehicles accounted for 79 per cent of all new passenger car registrations in 2022, with Norway racing ahead of other countries for EV adoption.

Let’s you think the EVs are mostly >>

**Maintaining an EV charger during winter is important to ensure that it works efficiently and effectively. Here are some tips on how to maintain your EV charger during winter:**

**Clear snow and ice:** Make sure the area around the charger is clear of snow and ice, so you can access it easily. If necessary, use a broom or shovel to remove any snow or ice buildup.

**Check for damage:** Inspect the charger for any signs of damage, such as cracks or rust. If you notice any damage, contact a professional to repair or replace the charger.

**Keep the charger clean:** Use a damp cloth to wipe down the charger to remove any dirt, salt or debris that may have accumulated on it. This helps to prevent corrosion and maintain its appearance.

**Inspect the charger cables:** Check the charging cables for any damage, cracks, or cuts. If you notice any damage, replace them immediately.

**Protect the charging port:** Use a cover or cap to protect the charging port from snow, ice, and debris. This will prevent damage and ensure the charging port stays clean.

**Check the power supply:** Inspect the power supply to ensure it's working correctly. Check for any loose connections or damage to the cable.

**Monitor the charging process:** During winter, it may take longer to charge your EV due to cold temperatures. Monitor the charging process and adjust your schedule accordingly.

**Update the hardware and software:** Like any other fueling or powering equipment, EV chargers require maintenance. This may could mean parts like cables and connectors, or the operational software required for the charging system to work at peak performance. Make sure you the software is up to date.

**Consider a maintenance plan:** Some EV charging manufacturers offer maintenance programs with the sale of their systems. These programs often include routine maintenance, equipment inspections, emergency callouts and/or training for your staff.

By following these tips, you can ensure your EV charger remains in good condition during winter, providing you with a reliable and efficient charging solution for your EV charging customers.



Keep your mittens on! Added bonus—they won't smell like gas.

located in the southern portion of the Norway, according to RTL Today, in the most northern outpost in the Arctic region of Norway, where the mercury can reach minus 51°C, 54 per cent of new car registrations were electric cars.

Drivers there take advantage of coping strategies applicable in any colder region.

**PERCEPTION: EV BATTERIES PERFORM POORLY IN COLD WEATHER  
REALITY: WORKAROUNDS CAN MANAGE THIS PROBLEM EFFICIENTLY**

Let's further discuss one of the most common myths about EV charging in cold weather - that the batteries perform poorly in cold temperatures. This is not entirely true. While EV batteries are happiest in moderate temperatures and do not like to charge or discharge at temperature extremes, it takes a lot for them to run down completely.

For one, car manufacturers have installed battery management systems to help moderate this climatic reaction in the more recently manufactured EVs.

Secondly, a battery can be "cold saturated" because of the following:

- Parking the vehicle outside for lengthy periods or overnight and the corresponding impact on battery chemistry.
- The combined impact of all systems operating at once within the vehicle, causing the batteries to lose charge or lose efficiency. Efficiency is typically defined as the amount of power it takes to get from point A to point B. The combined energy it takes to power all current operating systems, such as the drive train, heater, sound systems, etc., drain the battery.

Cold temperatures can combine with other circumstances to reduce an unplugged EV's range by up to 20 per cent but does not drain it completely.

How do you prepare for maximizing the capability of your EV battery? Plan your EV purchase. Prospective EV

buyers can look for a model that includes a climate-controlled battery. Two climate control methods (forced air or glycol liquid cooling) help maintain the proper operating temperature of the battery pack.

If you already have an EV and are looking for tips for charging your EV in cold weather, don't fear. All EVs benefit from practicing the three "Ps" of EV overnight care:

- 1) Park it in a garage or carport.
- 2) Plug it in overnight to a level 2 charger.
- 3) Preheat the battery.

**PERCEPTION: CHARGING AN EV IN COLD WEATHER IS NOT POSSIBLE  
REALITY: EV FAST CHARGING STATIONS ARE UP TO THE CHALLENGE**

Another common myth is that charging an EV in chilly weather is impossible. Cold weather affects EV charging, and while it might take a bit longer, it is still possible. Additionally, EV chargers in North America and Europe are all rated to operate within a range of minus 30° C to plus 50° Celsius. Some vendors, like BTC Power, supply chargers that operate from -40°C to plus 60°C.

Many of the charging devices in today's vehicles include heaters located strategically to ensure not just the battery but that all moving parts operate despite the cold, such as contacts closing completely. Effectively, a powered electronics device such as the charger becomes self-heating, ranging from approximately 93 per cent efficiency up to about 96 per cent efficiency.

Heaters also keep liquids within the system flowing, as liquids of many types tend to become thicker, or less viscous as the weather turns colder. The liquid within the BTC Power charger flows continuously and doesn't freeze, similar to leaving pipes on drip during cold weather.

**PERCEPTION: EV CHARGERS ARE DIFFICULT TO MANIPULATE IN COLD WEATHER**

**REALITY: CHARGE YOUR CAR AND KEEP THOSE MITTENS ON**

While most EV charging cables are constructed of plastic and rubber, which can become stiff in colder temperatures, a proper ergonomic design for the charging cables and touchscreen can make it easier to manage in cold weather.

EV charging manufacturers, like BTC Power, balance ergonomics with safety for reliable and quick recharging of the vehicle. This not only involves the cables plugged into the vehicle but extends to the touchscreen as well.

When instructions or tasks can only be completed using a touchscreen, in extreme temperatures, technologies such as PCAP can prove harder to utilize. Many EV chargers include mechanical buttons below the touchscreen that enable the driver to keep those gloves on, power up, and move on to the next stage of the journey.

To summarize, EV chargers have no problem working in the cold. Start with the right EV for your climate and follow the recommended instructions. Soon there'll be nothing to stop you from driving your EV in all seasons.

Here is a handy list of tips or steps you can take to mitigate the effects of wintry weather on your EV:

- 1) Park your EV in a garage or carport. The warmer or more ambient temperatures inside a shelter helps the battery maintain a warmer temperature and decreases cold's impact on its range.
- 2) Plug the vehicle into a Level 2 charger inside the garage. This warms the battery up to a working temperature.
- 3) Preheat the battery. Newer models have a preheat function or scheduled departure date built into the system. The driver can schedule the time of departure for a work assignment or trip, and the car's system will heat up the battery to the proper state of charge (SoC). This allows the driver to be prepared to leave on schedule with a battery charged to optimal percentage.

These three practices precondition your vehicle and allow it to charge more speedily. The driver who gets frustrated at the charging station has let their vehicle sit outside in the cold all night, did not plug it in and then pulled into a charging station two miles down the road, not

enough to preheat the battery. Now he's watching the minutes tick by. This is not the fault of the charging station but the battery's state. Preconditioning gets the battery to the desired temperature as the vehicle approaches the charging station to charge at maximum efficiency, whether plus or minus 20° F outside.

Turn your customers' range anxiety into assurance no matter what the weather holds. **■**

*Article by the technical experts at BTC POWER*



**The Right EV Charger for Your Convenience Store.**

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# See The Light With Fibrelite Composite Manhole Covers

By Ed Kammerer

**EVEN IN IDEAL CLIMACTIC CONDITIONS, THESE GUARDIANS OF ACCESS TO YOUR FUELING SYSTEM'S UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANKS (USTS), CONTAINMENT SUMPS AND MONITORING WELLS ARE SUSCEPTIBLE TO A WIDE RANGE OF DAILY ABUSE.**

Canada's long, dark winter has finally and mercifully come to an end and things are starting to look up: returning birds are flying by overhead, leaves are beginning to reappear on the trees and the sun is hanging around in the sky a little longer every day.

If you are the owner or operator of a retail-fueling business, while these are welcome and long-awaited developments, it is also time to take stock of what you see when you look down. For the first time in months, the forecourt surface is not covered with a layer or snow, ice, road salt and winter grime, so take a gander at the manhole covers that dot the forecourt.

Even in ideal climactic conditions, these guardians of access to your fueling system's underground storage tanks (USTs), containment sumps and monitoring wells are susceptible to a wide range of daily abuse. Most obvious is the passage of vehicles of all shapes and sizes – from sports cars to school buses and delivery trucks – over their surface. In the winter, snowplow blades can cause dog-earing of manhole skirts and mounting frames, abuse that can compromise sealing integrity and potentially result in harmful water intrusion into the UST system. All of these various types of load imbalances can lead to broken or missing bolts, cracks or holes in the cover or skirt, and excessive deflection. At the other end of the abuse spectrum, manhole covers that feature a balsa-wood core may swell, which can make getting access to the tank sump extremely difficult.

While they are susceptible to unavoidable ill treatment, the site's manhole covers must be able to complete the critical task that they are asked to perform: provide quick and easy access to the equipment that allows USTs to be loaded and serviced while preventing the intrusion of any foreign matter, from rain-water and ice to dirt and debris, that can affect the fueling system from performing reliably and safely.

While steel manhole covers have performed this assigned task admirably over the years, they do have several operational shortcomings. Specifically, after many years of absorbing the weight of passing vehicles, they can become bowl-shaped, allowing water to pool on their surface. Steel will also expand or contract as the atmospheric temperature rises or falls, which can also lead to bowing of the cover, undermining its sealing ability. >>



Fiberglass-composite construction manhole covers are watertight, lightweight, corrosion-free and immune to the deflection that can lead to bowing.



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To overcome the many environmental and usage challenges and variables that can reduce the ability of steel manhole covers to perform as required, manufacturers have looked beyond traditional steel to new fiberglass-composite construction materials as a solution. The result is a new class of manhole covers that are watertight, lightweight, corrosion-free and immune to the deflection that can lead to bowing.

**Covering Your Bases**

OPW Retail Fueling, Smithfield, NC, has taken the lead in the development of composite manhole covers that can unquestionably outperform traditional steel manhole-cover technology. The standard-setter in the composite-manhole category is the Fibrelite Manhole Cover Assembly. OPW acquired the Fibrelite brand in 2013, which, at the time, was the retail-fueling industry's first fiberglass-composite manhole covers and today remains the industry's only certifiably watertight access cover.

In addition to being watertight, Fibrelite manhole covers are lighter than

steel covers, making it ergonomically possible for a single person to remove and replace the cover with the aid of the Fibrelite lifting handle. Other advantages of the cover's fiberglass-composite materials of construction are that they are UV-resistant; anti-corrosion; have a non-slip surface; require no bolts for their installation; have an internal I-beam construction that ensures zero deflection; and feature a monolithic design that eliminates the risk of delamination occurring.

The Fibrelite covers come in 12-, 18-, 24-, 30-, 36- and 40-inch sizes with compatible mounting frames and skirts, and round, square or rectangular shapes in any color with locks available for all models. Heavy-duty versions are available for use at truck stops, bus depots and industrial sites that feature heavy machinery.

OPW also offers two other models of composite manhole covers: the Matador, which is the lightest cover in the industry and is available in 37- and 42-inch sizes, and the Conquistador™ Plus, which offer three mounting options that help ensure user-friendly convenience and long-lasting performance.

**Conclusion**

If you're still relying on traditional steel manhole covers on your forecourt, it might be time to assess their performance and consider a switch to the newer fiberglass-composite models that are now available. Specifically, OPW's Fibrelite Manhole Cover Assembly uses the benefits of fiberglass-composite technology to become a cover that can withstand the ravages of time, temperature and abuse while providing and maintaining a watertight seal that will result in longer service life, improved reliability and a best-in-class ability to prevent the water intrusion that can adversely affect the overall performance of a service station's fueling operation. **■**

*Ed Kammerer is the director of global product management for OPW, based in Cincinnati, OH, USA. He can be reached at ed.kammerer@opwglobal.com.*

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**DEFINING | WHAT'S NEXT**

## What's New



### **ISTOBAL Presented in Las Vegas 2023 its New Carwash Solutions for the US market With a Focus on Profitability**

On May 8-10, ISTOBAL USA revealed some exciting news at The Car Wash Show, Las Vegas, NV. The company showcased multiple new products and options specially developed for the US market. The new solutions respond to a demand from US customers for innovation, efficiency, and profitability.

The ISTOBAL M'WASH PRO, is a new, high-end, rollover that unifies the latest technology and the aesthetics of the group's European models with the versatility of the FLEX5 line of equipment. The new model is designed to offer increased profitability with its various configurations, extra options, and more efficient and connected technology.

ISTOBAL recognizes the need to cater to many types of vehicles. In recognition of that,

they now offer an extra wide option specifically for wider vehicles. "It's a sector of the market that many people ask about in the US and until now, there hasn't been an easy, retail solution for these types of vehicles" said Ian Burton, the North American director of sales.

Additionally, ISTOBAL offered attendees of The Car Wash Show a sneak peek of the soon to be available ISTOBAL T'BRUSH, a compact brush module that combines the best features of an in-bay automatic with the throughput of a tunnel. This ground-breaking crossover guarantees an outstanding wash quality, maximum efficiency first-class safety, and unparalleled adaptability.

The ISTOBAL T'BRUSH offers twice the wash coverage of traditional express wash equipment with fewer components and a wider range of use. Furthermore, both the top and side brushes contour the entire shape of the vehicle, a capability common with in-bay automatics that improves wash quality, coverage, and drastically reduces traditional on-site labor.

### **Kleen-Rite Acquires Vending Machine Manufacturer Laurel Metal Products**

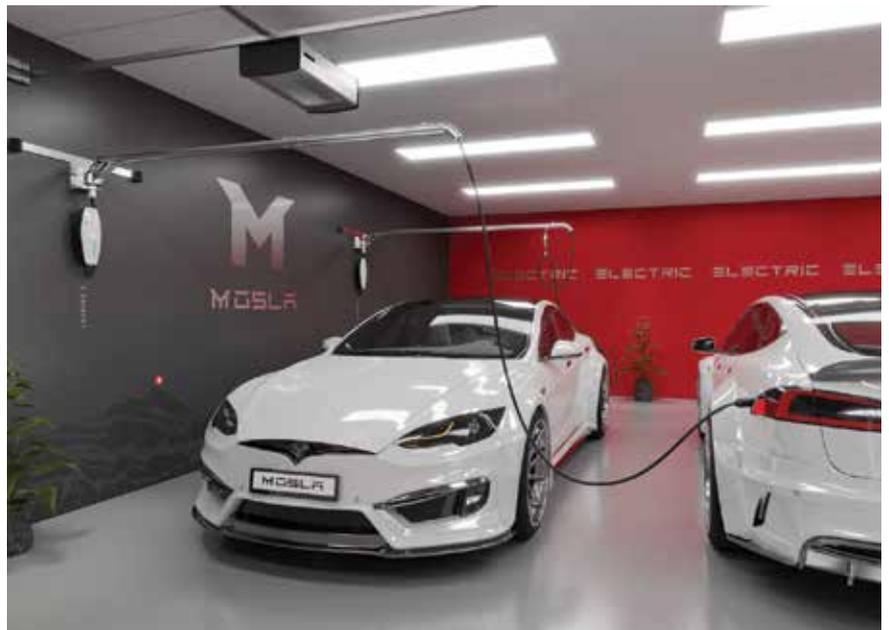
COLUMBIA, PA. – Kleen-Rite Corp. has been a reliable supplier to the carwash industry for over 60 years. They are proud to announce that they have acquired Laurel Metal Products.

A staple of the carwash industry, Laurel Metal Products is a leading manufacturer of carwash vending machines. The company originated in 1959 as a sheet metal fabrication shop before developing their first carwash vending machine in 1970. They specialize in drop-shelf vending, a method that reliably delivers products to customers at a highly successful rate.

Kleen-Rite and Laurel Metal Products have been partners for several decades so the acquisition makes sense for both parties. The move will streamline the process of building and stocking Laurel products, create opportunity for Kleen-Rite to use their resources to expand the Laurel brand, and be an important part of Kleen-Rite's overall strategy of continuous improvement in the dynamic and evolving carwash industry.

Laurel's current management will stay in place and all long-term employees will be retained. Their products will continue to offer exceptional quality backed up by trustworthy customer service. This exciting acquisition will only serve to bolster the strength of both Kleen-Rite and the Laurel brand in the future.

Laurel Metal Products vending machines, parts, and accessories are currently available at [www.kleenrite.com](http://www.kleenrite.com) or by calling 1-800-233-3873.



### **Mosmatic Launches New EV Charging Boom**

Mosmatic Canada Inc. is excited to launch our new EV Charging boom. Electric vehicles are the way of the future and charging stations and accessories are costly. Our electric charging boom protects your wire and charging gun from being run over and crushed and wires being ripped out. It will also avoid damages to your vehicle by keeping the wire off your car and suspended in air instead. Our charging boom will keep your charging stations organized and safe. For more information, please call 1-844-384-1602, or visit [www.mosmatic.com](http://www.mosmatic.com).



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