

Convenience & Carwash

JANUARY | FEBRUARY 2024

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- Packaging
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February 20-24, 2024 WPMA Expo Mirage Hotel, Las Vegas www.wpmacomnational-convention.com February 28-March 1, 2024 Southwest Car Wash Association Fort Worth, TX www.swcarwash.org March 5 & 6, 2024 Carwacs Toronto, ON www.convenienceu.ca	March 10-13, 2024 NAG Conference Tampa Bay, FL www.event.nagconvenience.com April 23-24, 2024 A.C.E. Show Halifax N.S www.theaceshow.ca May 13-15, 2024 The Car Wash Show Nashville, TN www.thecarwashshow.com	June 16-18, 2024 10th Women in Carwash™ Conference Salt Lake City, UT www.womenincarwash.com August 24, 2024 PetroCan Prairies Charity Golf Tournament Kingswood Golf & Country Club, La Salle, MB October 7-10, 2024 NACS Show Las Vegas, NV www.nacsshow.com	

Welcome to 2024



Hello and welcome to 2024. I hope that you're looking forward to another great year filled with the promise of something inspiring that will get you into the frame of mind to do better, do good, and do something new.

Recently I embarked on a three-day road trip where we stopped at many different roadside restaurants, gas stations and hotels. These stops included meals, gas and lodging and I am happy to share that, not only were these stops interesting, but the people we met along the way again affirmed that our industry loves our industry. Those working out at the pumps, those within the stores and behind counters greeted us with a smile and kind word. I love checking out both small and large chain sites to see what's new and what's hot.

I'm encouraged by the addition of the healthier-for-you foods that have been added to the store offerings. As someone who seldom eats prepared foods, I am happy that I can purchase a snack that is healthy and that which I can feel better sitting in a car for eight hours and know that snack won't show up as tighter jeans.


So, welcome to the first edition of the new year. We hope that you find inspiration to add something new to your store. Whether that be new and fresh breakfast options or planning ahead for the next holiday.

Human resources is a hot commodity these days; read on to learn how to protect yourself from the "he said, she said" scenario.

Carter Hammett brings to you our EV update article, sharing industry news and what's on the horizon for retailers wishing to know more about EV and how they can add this service to their site.

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

Brenda Jane Johnstone PUBLISHER

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Let's Make It a Great Year

The December holiday season is behind us for another year. I hope you found time to celebrate with family and friends during this special time.

However, the end of December doesn't mean the end of celebrations or holidays. In fact, it's all beginning again for another year of events, festivities and special occasions. So, don't pack up all of your holiday enthusiasm with your Christmas decorations. In this issue, the article Holidays = Excellent Sales Opportunities talks about how special events can bring in customers, and dollars, throughout the year.

With the province of Ontario recently announcing that sales of beer, wine, cider and ready-to-drink cocktails will be allowed in convenience stores by 2026, it's time for Ontario c-stores to consider how adding alcoholic beverages to your inventory could boost sales, especially during the various festivities and celebrations in your area.

Also in Ontario news, the Ontario Convenience Store Association (OCSA) recently announced that Dave Bryans is stepping down as CEO. In his retirement, he will still consult with the association throughout 2024, especially on the beverage alcohol file, which Dave has worked tirelessly on over the years. We at Convenience & Carwash Canada wish Dave a very happy retirement and thank him for all his hard work on behalf of the convenience store industry in Ontario. We also welcome Kenny Shim, known for his role as chief operating officer with the Ontario Korean Businessmen's Association, to the role of OCSA CEO.

As time marches on, things change. It's important to keep yourself informed on what is happening in the industry. We will continue to work to bring the news that matters to you through our magazine and website (www.convenienceandcarwash.com). Thank you for including us as a source of information and we look forward to 2024 with energy and passion for this industry and the people who work hard within in.

Happy 2024 – let's make it a great year.

Angela Altass
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AWARDS





The Ontario Convenience Stores Association (OCSA) recently announced that Dave Bryans is stepping down as chief executive officer. Bryans has decided to retire from his position with OCSA but will continue to assist the association on specific files in a consultant capacity.

“As I embrace this new phase of life, I am eager to slow down and savour the joys of personal pursuits,” says Bryans. “To continue to work on specific c-store files, I am opening cstoreconsulting.ca, which should launch in early 2024.”

The Ontario government recently announced that sales of beer, wine, cider and ready-to-drink cocktails will be allowed in convenience stores in the province by 2026. As Bryans has been diligently working on this achievement for years, this is one of the files that he will continue to assist the OCSA with in his retirement.

“I plan to assist the OCSA board throughout 2024 on the newly announced beverage alcohol file to ensure we clarify the final details for the thousands of family-run stores in Ontario,” says Bryans. “I am proud of forging new collaborative relationships with governments where we were invited to the table to discuss policy including the discussions for beer and wine modernization in Ontario. As we approach beer being available in c-stores, I can’t help but think how our efforts started some 15 years ago with the Free Our Beer campaign when we received 400,000 c-store customer signatures on a petition.”

After 20 years representing the interests of the convenience store channel with OCSA, Bryans says he is especially proud of passionately


defending the rights of family businesses.

“As a young child, I worked in my family convenience store,” he says. “I climbed the career ladder of JTI Tobacco, retiring after 31 years when I took on the challenge of rebuilding the Ontario Convenience Store Association and the creation of the Canadian Convenience Stores Association. Collectively, I have spent 51 years working in the convenience industry.”

Bryans notes that convenience stores have always been his passion.

“It has been a privilege to be a part of this incredible industry,” says Bryans. “From navigating the intricacies of government relations to shaping strategic visions, developing brand concepts, exploring new categories, and representing thousands of locations across Ontario, this journey has been immensely rewarding.”

Kenny Shim, known for his role as chief operating officer of the Ontario Korean Businessmen’s Association, has been named OCSA’s new CEO.

“I am passing the torch of CEO to the passionate and capable hands of Kenny Shim, a well-known advocate for family independent convenience stores in Ontario,” says Bryans. “I leave the convenience store channel in the capable hands of my successors and eagerly anticipate staying close for many ongoing projects.” 

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Future of Convenience: Navigating Innovation at the Atlantic Convenience Expo

The Atlantic Convenience Expo (ACE) stands as a beacon of innovation and opportunity in the ever-evolving landscape of convenience retail. As retailers, suppliers, and industry enthusiasts gear up for this annual gathering, they anticipate more than just a trade show – it's a convergence of ideas, a showcase of cutting-edge products, and a platform for networking that transcends conventional boundaries – the only one of its kind in Atlantic Canada.

Atlantic Canada's Hub of Innovation

ACE has earned its reputation as a hub of innovation, where the convenience retail industry's brightest minds come together to explore the latest trends and technological advancements. From state-of-the-art point-of-sale systems to emerging business add-ons that increase foot traffic, ACE is a treasure trove of ideas that can reshape how convenience stores operate.

"The expo is a great opportunity for retailers in Atlantic Canada to see what's happening in the industry without having to travel too far," says past attendee and store owner, Jane Mattie. "Every year, I leave with fresh ideas and a renewed enthusiasm for the potential of our industry."

Tailored Solutions for Retailers

One of ACE's key strengths is its ability to cater to retailers of all sizes. Whether you're

a mom-and-pop store or a large convenience chain, ACE offers diverse exhibitors and educational sessions tailored to your unique needs. Attendees can explore everything from the latest snack trends to advanced inventory management systems, ensuring they leave with actionable insights to enhance their business.

“ACE provides a platform for retailers like us to discover solutions that are practical and scalable. It’s not just about the big players; it’s about empowering every retailer to thrive in a dynamic market, and plus I get lots of goodies,” notes Reem Kartabal, a first-time attendee, and store manager.

Exclusive Networking Opportunities

Beyond the exhibits, ACE is a networking paradise. The expo attracts industry leaders, entrepreneurs, and professionals eager to connect and share experiences. ACE fosters an environment where meaningful connections are forged from networking sessions to interactive workshops.

“The relationships I’ve built at ACE have been invaluable to the growth of my business. It’s not just about what happens on the expo floor; the connections you make in the hallways and at the networking events truly make a difference,” emphasizes Kevin Johnston, a regular ACE attendee.


Educational Powerhouse

In addition to product showcases and networking opportunities, ACE boasts an impressive lineup of educational sessions. Industry experts and thought leaders share insights on topics ranging from market trends to regulatory updates. These sessions equip attendees with the knowledge needed to navigate the complex landscape of convenience retail successfully.

“The educational component of ACE is what sets it apart. It’s not just a showcase; it’s a learning experience. The seminars and workshops provide valuable insights that are directly applicable to our day-to-day operations,” states Mark Anderson, a seasoned convenience store owner.

Embracing the Future

As ACE approaches, the excitement is palpable. The expo is scheduled for April 23 and 24 in Halifax at the Halifax Convention Centre. Attendees can expect an immersive experience that goes beyond the ordinary trade show. From interactive exhibits to thought-provoking discussions on the future of convenience retail, ACE is a celebration of innovation, collaboration, and endless possibilities.

So, mark your calendars and get ready to unlock the doors to success at the Atlantic Convenience Expo. Whether you’re a seasoned industry veteran or a newcomer eager to make your mark, ACE is where convenience retail takes a giant leap into the future. Join us in embracing innovation, forging connections, and shaping the next chapter of convenience retail success. 

To register, visit: theaceshow.ca.



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or contact Brenda Jane Johnstone: phone 1.204.489.4215 email bjj@womenincarwash.com



Rise and Shine Breakfast

By Meline Beach

In the fast-paced world we live in, where mornings are often rushed, convenience is key. For many, the convenience and gas channel is a quick breakfast stop, addressing both the need for speed and the desire for a satisfying start to the day.

A significant shift in breakfast trends shows that convenience and gas stations are no longer just about grabbing a quick cup of coffee; it's about offering a comprehensive breakfast experience that resonates with on-the-go consumers.

"There's a wide variety of breakfast options available to consumers at every turn and we've seen the popularity for breakfast grow over the years," says Joseph Belcastro, general manager, Classic Group of Companies. With roots dating back to 1962 and four divisions serving the foodservice industry, Classic Group employs well-trained teams and professional chefs focused on exceptional flavour and innovation to produce quality food products.

Country Style has a specially designed four-level breakfast and lunch foodservice program at over 400 express kiosks at convenience and gas retailers across Canada. >>





“The morning day part within the convenience and gas channel is very important,” says Karen Weldman, vice-president, New Business Development, Express Brands. “Ensuring owners have high-quality beverage, bakery, and food products available is important, especially in the morning. Since breakfast is Country Style’s key sandwich category and we are a morning business, breakfast is now the largest component of our overall sales.”

Diverse Grab-and-Go Breakfast Menus

The breakfast menus in convenience and gas stations today go far beyond the standard coffee and doughnuts. Retailers have expanded their grab-and-go offerings to cater to a broad spectrum of tastes, ensuring that there’s something for everyone. Whether it’s a commuter stopping for fuel or a traveller hitting the road, the demand for quick, portable breakfast options is ever-growing and retailers are responding by offering a wide variety of breakfast items, from classic favourites to innovative creations.

“For convenience stores, we’ve observed a growing demand for expanded options, encompassing choices that accommodate dietary preferences and new flavours, such as back bacon, honey bacon, maple-smoked breakfast sausages, and croissant sandwiches with chipotle mayo,” explains Belcastro. “While the traditional staples remain

offerings, breakfast wraps and burritos stand out as our most popular items.”

Belcastro adds, “Heat-and-serve options are becoming increasingly popular for convenience stores with warming oven capabilities. It’s an added level of convenience for the consumer who wants to grab-and-go without having to warm up in the microwave themselves. We offer a variety of breakfast sandwiches on croissants, biscuits or toast that can be kept in a warming oven and consumed right away.”

New warming ovens are a great feature that allows operators to warm up all foods with pre-existing settings for consistency. Some ovens also have multi-shelf features that can allow four to five items in the oven at once with each cooking or baking to their settings.

In addition to coffee and other hot beverages, Country Style offers a large variety of fresh bakery items, such as donuts, muffins, cookies and tarts, as well as eight breakfast sandwiches on bagels or English muffins and its wraps, as a recent addition.

“Our most popular breakfast sandwich is the Sunriser,” says Weldman. “We recently launched the new Spicy Chicken Sandwich on a croissant, which is being served as a breakfast item, capitalizing on the chicken trend.”

Like Classic Group’s experience with specific preferences, Country Style has also noticed this trend as customers can now request customized versions of breakfast sandwiches, such as vegetarian, prepared exactly as they want.

Guiding Success

Belcastro encourages convenience and gas retailers who are considering launching a breakfast program to start simple and build up slowly. “Anything new takes time to gain consumer trust and familiarity. Add combos or incentives to help entice new customers, such as free coffee with purchase or buy one, get 2nd 50 per cent off. Merchandise and organize coolers and/or warmers regularly and maintain a fresh rotation of breakfast foods with your foodservice distributor to keep your shelves full.”

Presentation and consistency are key factors for success. Customers need to know that they can consistently have a great breakfast at your store.

Classic Group of Companies, as a foodservice supplier, conducts

consistently popular, we also cater to customers seeking healthier alternatives and diverse tastes. This includes items like peanut butter and chocolate overnight oats, fruit and yogurt snack boxes, breakfast bento boxes, and fresh berry Greek yogurt parfaits. Among our

in-person training programs for safe and effective food handling and Q&A sessions.

"We have helped larger companies with their food handling training and guidebooks for consistency in all of their c-stores across Canada," says Belcastro. "We work with c-store distributors to ensure food options are always available. Breakfast is a growing category that, if done well, can have a lot of benefits long term."

In addition to ensuring the location is well operated, Country Style helps retailers promote their breakfast menu with point-of-sale (POS) marketing materials for both the interior and exterior of the store. In addition, retailers are encouraged to promote their menu with pictures, testimonials and quality of products on their social media platforms.

Weldman encourages retailers to be aware of local competition and to

partner with a foodservice provider that can offer quality food products at competitive pricing.

"By partnering with a company such as MTY, an owner can benefit from the buying efficiencies afforded due to the number of brands within our portfolio," says Weldman. "We ensure our breakfast menu is efficient with limited menu items to control waste and our POS system allows owners to manage ordering and labour, which is important to understand when managing a business."

Weldman emphasizes, "Consumers have many options, so creating a 'point of difference' can be key. If the owner maintains a clean and well-stocked location and ensures the staff are friendly, it forms a relationship, encouraging customers to return not only for the experience but also for the high quality and delicious food products."

Looking Ahead

The convenience and gas channel is well-positioned to continue shaping breakfast trends. Innovations in menu offerings and clean, friendly practices are expected to gain prominence. Emphasizing convenience, diverse menus, and a commitment to quality, convenience stores are positioned to remain a go-to destination for those seeking a satisfying start to the day. **■**

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



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Customers Expect Well-Maintained Washrooms

By Angela Altass

How clean and well-maintained are your store's washrooms? Customers pay attention to details and they are not going to tolerate a lackluster effort when it comes to keeping washrooms clean.

"It is interesting to see the rise in consumer awareness and expectations pertaining to cleanliness and sanitation of washrooms," says Rob Helgason, national category manager Canada, Grocery, General Merchandise, Health and Beauty Care, and Store Supplies, Core-Mark Canada. "It is also interesting to see how it directly impacts the shopper's experience in a c-store, which ultimately determines whether they will become a repeat customer."

With so many choices in the marketplace for both commercial and domestic cleaning products, Core-Mark has implemented a Janitorial and Sanitation Program that helps their retail partners, as well as their sales team, choose and bundle together optimal products for the right applications.

"By implementing a program seg-

mented by the different areas of C&G locations, one area being washrooms, retailers can efficiently determine the correct products for the job," says Helgason.

Proper sanitation and cleanliness of washrooms is vitally important, says Helgason.

"Shoppers feel that experience is an essential factor when choosing where they will shop," says Helgason. "Cleanliness is one of the top-ranked reasons for a consumer to return to a c-store location, with more than 60 per cent of consumers saying they spend more in locations with clean washrooms."

Helgason advises convenience store owners to only use the proper commercial products designed for washrooms.

"Cleaning products created for household use are not meant for the heavy



Cintas Canada 2023 finalists included **Forest Pavillion** in Winnipeg, Manitoba

Up to 80 per cent of consumers think it is important to have a posted cleaning schedule in the washroom. This reassures them of the retailer's commitment to cleanliness and sanitation.

traffic in commercial washrooms," he notes. "Secondly, up to 80 per cent of consumers think it is important to have a posted cleaning schedule in the washroom. This reassures them of the retailer's commitment to cleanliness and sanitation and builds their loyalty to re-visit that specific c-store location."

Washrooms are so important that there are contests established around them.

Irving Oil holds an annual Really Clean Washrooms contest that saw a customer in Saint John, New Brunswick win \$10,000 in 2023. Customers use their phones to scan QR codes located on the washroom mirror or on the back of washroom stall doors at Irving locations, enabling them to send a text message using a site code to identify the washroom. This enters them in the contest and gives them the

chance to win.

"2023 has been the third year of offering our customers a chance to win prizes by texting feedback on their experience at Irving locations throughout our network," says Erin Caldwell, manager of Irving Oil's Really Clean Washroom program. "The response has been overwhelmingly positive with thousands of feedback texts received. We have been able to use these comments for continuous improvement as well as share them with frontline staff to celebrate the excellent feedback. The number of positive messages speaks to how much it means to travelers that they have a clean place to stop while they're on the road."

The most common comments from customers focus on well-stocked facilities as well as cleanliness.

"Sometimes, our customers notice little extras at our sites, like the fresh flowers on our larger rest stops," says Caldwell. "Our retail partners, dealers and, most importantly, the frontline staff, make this a successful program. On occasion, we also receive wonderful feedback that calls out specific employees for going above and beyond for the customer. One of the most common themes from the contest feedback focuses on Irving retail sites being the place to stop and thanking us for always being clean and reliable."

Caldwell says it is important that when a customer sees an Irving sign ahead, they know they will receive a welcoming and clean stop.

"Simply put, it's who we are," says Caldwell. "Customers are at the heart of everything we do and offering clean >>

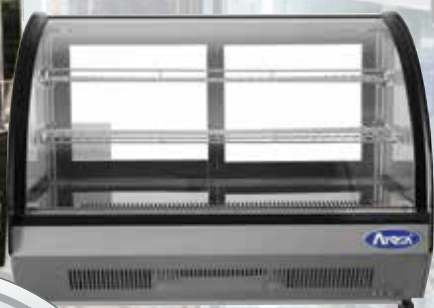
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▲ 2023 finalist **The Big Apple** Colborne, ON

washrooms is a tangible way to show our thanks and respect for their loyalty to us.”

Cintas Canada holds Canada’s Best Restroom contest every year of which Hard Bean Brunch Co of Port Moody, British Columbia was the winner for 2023. Finalists were Forest Pavillion in Winnipeg, Manitoba; The Gathering Place in Vancouver, British Columbia; Yesterday’s Auto Gallery in Edmonton, Alberta; and The Big Apple in Colborne, Ontario.

Now in its 14th year, the nationwide contest highlights businesses that have invested in developing and maintaining exceptional washrooms that are accessible to the public. The winner receives \$2,500 in Cintas products and services.

Nominees for the 2023 contest were judged on five criteria: Cleanliness, visual appeal, innovation, functionality and unique design elements. Online voting was open to the public.

“Winning the title of Canada’s Best Restroom is truly an honour,” says Heather Rhodes, CEO, Hard Bean Brunch Co. “We take pride in our washrooms and we’re glad to see the public does too.”

Hard Bean Brunch Co. promoted the

contest on their social media profiles. They also displayed mirror clings provided by Cintas, which included a QR code for voting.

**NOMINEES
FOR THE 2023
CONTEST WERE
JUDGED ON
FIVE CRITERIA:**
CLEANLINESS,
VISUAL APPEAL,
INNOVATION,
FUNCTIONALITY
AND UNIQUE
DESIGN
ELEMENTS.

“Thousands of votes for this year’s five finalists poured in from across the country, demonstrating peoples’ appreciation for clean and memorable washroom facilities,” says Candice Raynsford, marketing manager, Cintas Canada.

Dyson Canada worked with Leger in 2023 to survey Canadian consumers on their perceptions of indoor air quality and found that 38 per cent of Canadians are more concerned about air quality since the pandemic and eight in 10 Canadians feel busi-

nesses have a responsibility to improve indoor air quality.

“They feel indoor air quality can be compromised by pollutants and air purification systems are effective in reducing them,” says a Dyson spokesperson, noting that the Dyson Airblade is a sensor-operated touch-free hand dryer with HEPA filtration that purifies the air used to dry hands.”

Dyson’s 2020 Washroom Attitudes study found that as a result of the pandemic, 75 per cent of Canadians are less



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Says Heather
Rhodes, CEO, Hard
Bean Brunch Co.

"WE TAKE PRIDE IN
OUR WASHROOMS
AND WE'RE GLAD
TO SEE THE PUBLIC
DOES TOO."



▲ 2023 finalist **The Gathering Place** Vancouver, BC



▲ 2023 finalist **Yesterdays Auto Gallery** Edmonton, AB

likely to leave a washroom without washing their hands.

Kohler Canada recently launched a new website, kohler.ca, with a section dedicated to commercial products. Donna Church, manager, marketing and communications, Kohler Canada, comments on the accuracy of their touchless technology for commercial applications.

"Our touchless flush sensors eliminate random ghost flushes that are evident on other technologies," says Church. "Our touchless faucet sensors optimize the faucet's operation with the sensor situated under the spout close to the aerator. It is designed for accurate detection to save on water. Our toilet seats have specific features that are hygienic. The lift tab is a big feature and is used frequently in commercial bathrooms."

As you review some of the newest technological advancements in washroom products, remember to keep in mind the basics, including the importance of regular cleaning and maintenance. People will notice your efforts and are likely to reward

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By Meline Beach



Navigating a Green Horizon

In an era where environmental consciousness is increasingly becoming a priority, businesses across various sectors actively adopt sustainability to reduce their ecological footprint.

The convenience and gas channel, traditionally associated with quick transactions and on-the-go essentials, is no exception. The industry has undergone a notable shift toward sustainability in recent years, with various initiatives actively working to minimize environmental impact and foster a greener future.

Renewable Energy

One significant aspect of sustainability is the adoption of renewable energy sources. Forward-thinking businesses are incorporating solar panels to harness the sun's power, providing a clean, renewable energy alternative. This reduces reliance on traditional energy grids and demonstrates a commitment to reducing carbon emissions.

Recognizing the importance of environmental responsibility and responding to customer and business values, Rabba aims to contribute to a more sustainable and healthy business by harnessing the power of solar energy. They collaborated with Green Integrations and Star Energy Solutions to develop a solar generation system for its Mississauga distribution facilities, as part of its sustainability efforts to reduce the carbon footprint of its grocery network.

"We have been working with both Green Integrations and Star Energy Solutions for many years and have a long history of executing energy-saving and emission-reducing projects with each of them," says Rima Rabba, head of marketing at Rabba Fine Foods. This includes various retrofits, upgrades, and multiple energy savings initiatives at its distribution and store network.

"Rabba's distribution facilities are large consumers of >>

electricity with extensive refrigeration and frozen operations distributing items such as ice cream and fresh produce,” says Rabba. “We appreciate how solar energy allows us to insulate our daily operations from future fluctuations in energy prices or grid reliability issues.”

Despite high initial upfront costs, Rabba was able to leverage tax incentives to help offset the cost.

“Our leveled cost of electricity for solar power is approximately \$0.55/kWh, meanwhile, we currently pay about \$0.14/kWh all-in for grid-supplied electricity,” says Rabba, who remains committed to operating in a socially and environmentally responsible manner.

In terms of return on investment, Rabba actively pursues long-term energy savings, demonstrating a commitment that spans over 20 years.

PARKLAND CORPORATION HAS INSTALLED SOLAR PANELS ON THE ROOFS OF 54 RETAIL SITES ACROSS NINE COUNTRIES, WITH THE HIGHEST CONCENTRATION IN PUERTO RICO, BOASTING 30 SITES.

Rabba’s initiatives serve as an example of how businesses can future-proof themselves with renewable energy. Retailers looking to embrace sustainability should consider conducting environmental impact assessments, engaging with renewable energy experts, and exploring partnerships with organizations experienced in sustainable solutions. Additionally, understanding customer values and market trends can guide the development of effective sustainability strategies.

Parkland Corporation, the Canadian-headquartered international retail giant of fuel, food, and convenience stores, is thoughtfully advancing its sustainability strategy. With approximately 4,000 retail and commercial locations across Canada, the United States, and the Caribbean region, Parkland harnesses the power of the sun. The company has installed solar panels on the roofs of 54 retail sites across nine countries, with the highest concentration in Puerto Rico, boasting 30 sites.

Simon Scott, director of communications at Parkland Corporation, states, “Solar panels provide a portion of the energy needs at most of these sites, while the grid supplies the remainder. Each site ranges in size from 30kW to 100kW, resulting in an estimated 2.5-3.0MW of



production to date. We anticipate expanding this capacity to 8-10MW in the coming months.”

Biofuels and Electric Charging Stations

As the world seeks alternatives to traditional fossil fuels, convenience and gas retailers are exploring biofuels as a cleaner option. Biofuels, derived from organic materials, emit fewer greenhouse gases compared to conventional fuels and provide consumers with a greener choice at the pump.

Furthermore, the integration of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations is gaining momentum. As electric vehicles become more prevalent, convenience stores and gas stations are adapting to accommodate this shift in consumer preferences. Installing EV charging stations not only supports sustainable transportation but also positions these establishments as hubs for eco-conscious consumers.

Parkland is a leader in low-carbon fuel production and the company strives to provide its customers with choices that help them lower their environmental impacts. Using a technique called co-processing, Parkland’s Burnaby refinery produces over 90 per cent of the renewable fuel that’s produced in Canada.

As described in the company’s Powering Journeys podcast, episode 7: All About Co-Processing, crude oil is taken to their refinery and turned into different fuels like gasoline, diesel, and aviation fuel. Co-processing is a process by which renewable feedstocks, such as waste vegetable oils or waste animal fats are mixed in with crude oil, and processed at their refinery to make renewable fuels. Biofuels, like ethanol and biodiesel, are blended with finished

fuels, like gasoline and diesel, to lower the carbon intensity. That fuel is used in airplanes, ferries, boats, and regular cars and trucks without the need for any mechanical modifications. This is an environmentally conscious, cost-effective solution to help lower carbon emissions for parts of the economy which are difficult to electrify, as well as for consumers for whom EVs are currently impractical or unaffordable.

Parkland also operates the largest EV charging network in British Columbia, with 50 ultrafast charging locations.

Waste Reduction and Recycling Programs

The convenience and gas channel is actively working to reduce waste. Establishments are implementing recycling programs, offering designated bins for various recyclable materials such as plastic, glass, and paper. Some retailers have gone a step further by minimizing the use of disposable packaging and encouraging customers to bring reusable bags.

In 2020, the City of Lethbridge implemented a mandatory recycling and organics bylaw for all residents and businesses. The COVID-19 pandemic led to the postponement of implementing this bylaw until early 2023, providing a grace period for full compliance by fall 2023.

“We collaborated with Waste Connections, our waste contractor, to position recycle bins alongside our existing garbage bins and also supplied us with 64-gallon totes on wheels for organics,” says Brent Morris, president of Gas King Oil Co. Ltd., who implemented their recycling and organics program at Gas King locations in Lethbridge in spring 2023. “We applied decals to all of our waste, recycle, and organic receptacles



so that our employees and customers knew which receptacle to use. It took a few months to determine the frequency of our recycle and organic pickups, but Waste Connection has been great to work with, and everything now operates smoothly. Over time, our staff adapted and incorporated the habit of organizing and placing their waste in the correct container, becoming a part of their daily routine.”

Beyond Parkland’s transportation side of the business, the company also applies sustainability efforts to its food-service and loyalty programs as well. “We offer our retail customers the choice to redeem their loyalty rewards points in the form of carbon credits to help offset the impact of their travel,” says Scott.

The company serves its new Bistro coffee in cups made from bamboo, a fast-growing and highly renewable resource that enables harvesting without causing harm to the plant. Unlike traditional disposable cups made from plastic or foam, bamboo cups decompose more easily in

composting environments, contributing to a reduced environmental impact.

Ongoing Innovation

The journey toward sustainability in the convenience and gas channel is dynamic and ongoing. Industry leaders are recognizing the importance of continuous innovation to address new challenges and opportunities. From renewable energy adoption to waste reduction initiatives, businesses in the convenience and gas sector are committed to navigating the green horizon and contributing to a more sustainable future. **■**

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



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Holidays = Excellent Sales Opportunities

By Angela Altass

Throughout the year, people celebrate. There are holidays, festivities and events that can provide excellent opportunities to market products and attract new customers to your stores.

All of the major holidays are huge when it comes to sales opportunities, says Professor David Soberman, Canadian national chair in strategic marketing, Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto. “These include May 24 weekend, Canada Day weekend, Labour Day weekend, Thanksgiving, Halloween, and Christmas/New Year. Events like Christmas, Thanksgiving, and the Super Bowl, when people eat a lot of snacks and often come into the store last minute, are big occasions for convenience stores.”

The Ontario government recently announced that sales of beer, wine, cider and ready-to-drink cocktails will be allowed in convenience stores in the province by 2026 as it will not be renewing an agreement with the owners of The Beer Store, which had prevented alcohol from being sold in these stores. Retailers will have to follow Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario rules regarding the sale of alcohol.

“Beer and wine sales being liberalized to allow convenience stores to carry them will help make the holidays even more important to Ontario convenience stores,” says Soberman.

Anne Kothawala, president and CEO of the Convenience Industry Council of Canada says the recent announcement

from the Ontario government is welcome news for Ontario’s convenience stores.

“It’s a true win, win, win for convenience stores, local producers, and consumers,” she says. “It gives our retail members a new product category to keep stores open. It will also bring more foot traffic which means more eyes on other products, including confectionary, food, and beverages.”

The announcement makes convenience a one-stop-shop again, returning the word convenience to convenience stores, says Kothawala.

The one-stop-shop concept can especially be important during holidays, when people are busy and the time for shopping is marked by a specific date on the calendar.

“The most important dimension for successful holiday promotion is to do something different,” says Soberman. “If you just do a discount, it looks similar to other stores. Contests that create engagement and co-promotions are just a couple of the out-of-the-box ideas that can stand out. Bundling products or co-promoting with other local businesses, such as the local skating rink, or a business located near yours, are good ways to promote your seasonal and holiday deals.”

Careful inventory management and

specials/promotions on items that are “in tune with the times,” will help convenience stores snag their share of holiday spending dollars, says Soberman.

“For example, the first time there is a snowfall, offer a free windshield brush to anyone who spends \$25 or more,” says Soberman. “Even better, get brushes with your store’s logo and name on them so the customer is reminded of where to do last minute shopping.”

People are out and about more during festive times of the year, which equals

more spending, and stores need to be prepared for the busy times, says Soberman.

“In other words, you need to bring your A-game or it will have a disproportionate effect on sales,” says Soberman. “Because sales take off at the holidays, inventory management is tougher and the cost of being out-of-stock is higher.”

Promoting your business on social media is really important, especially if you have something unique to offer, such as a holiday themed contest, says Soberman.

“It’s super important to be on social media during holidays,” says Milton Charistos, owner and CEO of the digital marketing agency Raccoon Eyes. “You can use social media to share cool holiday deals, posts, and chat with customers. Social media makes your store feel friendly and part of the holiday fun.”

People receive a lot of information and Charistos says it’s important to remind customers that you are there for them.

“We have to connect with customers, especially at Christmas, Easter, etc. when buyers feel ready to buy,” says Charistos. “We highly recommend for all businesses to have a website and be visible on Google.”

Sometimes it is necessary to change how you talk with customers, depending on the holiday, says Charistos.

“Christmas is different from Halloween,” he notes. “So, ads and posts change to match each holiday vibe. This way, messages feel just right for the occasion. Your business needs to find the correct path to convert online clicks into clients.”

Charistos recommends that convenience stores use Facebook and Instagram to show holiday deals.

“And, of course, don’t forget Google; search engine optimization and Google AdWords,” says Charistos. “Make special ads and offers for each holiday. Ask customers to join in the fun with contests. Send emails to tell people about your holiday specials. If possible, team up with local popular people to talk about your store. And, don’t forget to make your store look festive with decorations.”

There is always a holiday or special event not far away at any time of year. Acknowledging festive celebrations can lead to increased sales and foot traffic for your stores. Don’t miss out on the opportunities that come with the next special date on your calendar. ■



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Revolutionizing IBA Carwash Customer Experiences with a Mobile App

By Julie Graff



Modern entry units have provided some additional functionality, such as upselling and contests, but the opportunities have been somewhat limited due to the lack of staff at most IBAs.

However, as they have in nearly every other industry, mobile apps are changing how people interact with the carwash, particularly at in-bay automatics. They augment the pay station experience and provide a host of new options for operators and customers that were previously out of reach for unattended washes.

Monthly Wash Plans – Not Just for Tunnels Anymore

One of the most significant opportunities mobile applications open up to IBAs is the capability to provide monthly wash plans. Previously, these plans were primarily managed through RFID technology, which recognized member vehicles and permitted entry. This method involved a carwash attendant affixing an RFID tag to a vehicle's windshield, a process that does work at unattended IBAs. As a result, IBAs faced challenges in adopting subscription models.

Mobile apps eliminate the need for an RFID tag. The customer can purchase various services, including wash subscriptions through the mobile app. Upon arriving at the wash, customers can scan a QR code provided by the app at >>

Transactions at in-bay automatic carwashes are fairly straightforward. A customer pulls up to an entry unit, selects a wash, pays and waits for the bay to become available.



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Build Recurring Revenue

A mobile app allows a wash customer to purchase, redeem, and manage a wash membership, all without the assistance of an employee.

the entry unit, which recognizes their membership and allows them to wash. With this ability, IBA operators can now generate recurring revenue while locking in customer loyalty.

More Ways to Drive Loyalty

Monthly wash plans aren't the only way mobile apps encourage repeat business. The most obvious way is through loyalty programs similar to those offered by popular coffee chains and retail staples – customers earn points on purchases that can be redeemed for free services and merchandise. A mobile app could provide your carwash with a loyalty app in which customers could earn free washes.

Additionally, mobile apps cultivate loyalty with:

- Personalized push notifications offering deals and coupons with single-use bar codes to prevent fraud
- Games that keep them engaged and allow them to win free washes
- The ability to purchase wash bundles (e.g., by four washes, get one free)

Don't Forget the C-Store

If your IBA car wash is part of a c-store and/or gas station, there's even more to love about a mobile carwash app. A mobile app makes it easy for customers to purchase carwashes and gas in one convenient place, even allowing them to start the gas pump right from the app.

Beyond that, there are a wealth of opportunities for cross-promotion, allowing you to combine carwash, fuel and drink promotions to drive traffic. For instance, a customer who comes in for a coffee may see a sign that says "Save \$2 off your next carwash. Download our app." You've already got the customer in your ecosystem, so why not leverage that to promote other services?

You can have subscriptions for products/services outside the carwash as well, such as a drink subscription. Best of all, you can tie all store profit centers under a single app, saving you time and

Increase Customer Loyalty

Drive return visits by capturing contact information from wash customers with the app and incentivizing them with a loyalty program or other promotions.

frustration when trying to calculate financials.

Make a Positive Impression

When you're running an unattended wash, intuitive, engaging technology is critical. By offering a mobile app, you can provide a friendly, convenient experience that will enhance your reputation and help your entire business grow. **DRB**

Julie Graff is the creative manager for DRB, a leading provider of point-of-sale and business optimization technology for the carwash industry.

Drive Customer Engagement

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Fueling Success: A Comprehensive Guide to Future-Ready Gas Station Operations

By Steve Couillard

In the competitive world of gas stations, each drop of fuel carries significant value. It is this understanding that separates thriving businesses from those merely getting by.

This article will delve into key strategies from leveraging partnerships, combating fuel wastage, utilizing data analytics, to preventing fuel theft that can radically transform your approach to fuel management. Buckle up as we unravel insights that can turn your gas station into a profit powerhouse.

Fuel Management: The Power of Partnership

Establishing solid relationships with fuel contractors is akin to strengthening the backbone of your operation. These contractors go beyond being mere providers; they become dependable allies. Exclusive deals, attractive discounts, and favorable credit terms are just a few benefits that can be unlocked through nurturing these relationships. These partnerships not only ensure favorable terms and steady supply but can also positively impact your bottom line.

Let's put a spotlight on fuel management experts – the unsung heroes of the fuel industry. With a keen eye on your fuel inventory, these experts do more than solve problems and maintain order. They ensure compliance with all



photo courtesy Englobe Corporation

regulatory requirements and bring technical expertise to your operation. They handle and often anticipate issues, ensuring your fuel operations run as smoothly as a well-oiled engine. Why settle for ordinary when you can have extraordinary allies? Building and solidifying these relationships is not only about efficiency; it's your secret formula to improving overall profitability.

Reducing Fuel Wastage: Best Practices for Gas Station Owners

Efficient gas station operations hinge on strategic practices to maintain optimal fuel levels and minimize vapor losses. For owners aiming to reduce waste, the focus should be on critical aspects like shrink reduction through meter calibration and employee training.



Ensuring the accuracy of fuel dispensing meters is a key strategy to minimize shrinkage. Regular calibration guarantees precise measurement and dispensing, reducing errors leading to financial losses. Consistent calibration checks, in line with industry standards, prevent discrepancies and build customer trust by ensuring precise and transparent fuel transactions.

High staff turnover in the industry can hinder proper training for accurate daily inventory recording. A proven fuel management program can compensate for potential inaccuracies caused by busy or inexperienced staff, ensuring reliable data integrity despite changing personnel. Nonetheless, employee training remains an essential investment, fostering a culture of fuel conservation and operational efficiency. Implementing these two strategies can lead to not only improved efficiency but also a tangible reduction in fuel shrinkage.

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photo courtesy Englobe Corporation

Data Analytics: Reducing Shrinkage and Boosting Profits

Data analytics has emerged as a pivotal force reshaping gas station fuel management. By harnessing advanced tools, owners can make informed decisions, accurately forecast demand, and fine-tune fuel inventory with precision.

This approach goes beyond mere data interpretation. It's about transforming raw information into actionable insights, ensuring each move in your fuel inventory is backed by data-driven decisions. With data analytics, predicting demand and optimizing inventory levels become seamless. This isn't fortune-telling; it's a sophisticated tool that decodes patterns and trends, providing a competitive edge in the ever-changing landscape of fuel management.

Data analytics acts as a compass, guiding you towards operational excellence where informed decisions, anticipated demands, and optimal fuel utilization converge. It's an indispensable tool to help you stay ahead, monitor shrinkage, and increase your bottom line.



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Fuel Management: Preventing Fuel Fraud to Safeguard Fuel Inventories

Preventing fuel fraud is an essential aspect of safeguarding gas station inventories. By understanding common methods of fuel fraud, we can develop robust defenses against unauthorized access and theft.

Understanding this adversary is the first line of defense. Investigating prevalent fuel fraud methods reveals the weak points in your security armor. Identifying threats is important but being proactive in fortifying your defenses against potential breaches is the goal. Fuel management experts can detect fraudulent transactions and help you safeguard inventories.


To protect gas station inventories, three actionable tips stand out for immediate implementation:

1. Invest in innovative surveillance systems to monitor key areas.
2. Enforce stringent access controls, limiting entry to specific personnel only.
3. Incorporate tamper-evident technologies to prevent and discourage unauthorized access.

Working with fuel management experts plays a significant role in increasing your bottom line. It helps create strong partnerships and leverages data analytics as tools to exceed customer needs in this dynamic market. Increase your profitability by adopting proactive measures to prevent wastage and fraud.

Looking ahead; digital transformation, sustainability, and action-driven insights will guide efficiency, compliance, and environmental responsibility in the fuel industry. It's not about reacting to a situation; it's about staying one step ahead.

At Englobe, a leading specialty engineering and environmental services firm in Canada, we can assist you in reaching your goals. Offering a comprehensive suite of services including expertise in Fuel Management – from meter calibration to testing and inspecting petroleum equipment, as well as inventory reconciliation – we assist thousands of gas stations and corporations across Canada in their endeavors for success.

For more information about Englobe and our services, visit our website: englobecorp.com 

With over 30 years of expertise in sales, product development, branding, and business improvement, Steve Couillard is part of the powerhouse driving sales and business development at Englobe Corp, a leader in the fuel industry. Steve's skills lie in pinpointing problems and finding strategic solutions, boosting clients to their full potential, and maximizing profits. For the past six years, he is immersed himself in the fuel industry through Englobe Corp, mastering its ins and outs. He is your go-to ally, dedicated to helping companies achieve their business goals. Supported by an exceptional team at Englobe, Steve turns challenges into triumphs in the ever-evolving landscape of the fuel industry.



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Electric Avenue

Our latest cross-country roundup of notable and innovative EV updates, new year's edition!

By Carter Hammett

By now it should be taken as a given that EVs are here to stay. Innovative developments seem to manifest almost daily and there's no shortage of pioneering concepts encompassing everything from energy storage to chargers to design making the rounds as the "next best thing." One of these rolled out December 4 as Vancouver Fire Rescue Services unveiled a Canadian first: An electric fire engine. This concept is an agile, responsive, safe and climate-friendly emergency response vehicle with health benefits for frontline firefighters.

The Rosenbauer RTX Pumper Truck is now operating out of Firehall No. 1 in Strathcona and supports the city's by replacing old vehicles with EVs.

"This state-of-the-art electric fire engine represents an important milestone in our efforts to reduce carbon emissions from our fleet," said Ken Sim, Mayor of Vancouver. "We are extremely proud to be the first in Canada to deploy an electric fire engine and lead the way with this exciting addition to Vancouver's firefighting fleet."

From fleet to street, California-based climate tech company ElectricFish builds distributed energy storage solutions powered by software while supporting energy resilience in local communities, all with 100 per cent renewable energy.

CEO Anurag Kamal says that some of their most recent developments represent a significant leap forward in energy storage capabilities. "We've recently pioneered a groundbreaking energy >>



optimization patent that enables us to extract maximum value from stored energy, ensuring that every watt counts and we are never out of energy.

"I believe the industry will see significant growth and a transformational shift towards heavy-duty electric vehicles, and extremely fast charging sessions from

Integrated Automotive Experience (IAE), a marketing agency specializing in the automotive sector. Bernardin now leads the development of EV training tailored for industry professionals.

IAE has launched a comprehensive EV training program, leveraging Bernardin's curated content.

through EV roaming. While still in its embryonic stages, Agora's main goal is to create awareness and provide education that in Canada, it is possible for EV drivers and commercial fleet managers to use a single account to connect on multiple charging networks.

EV roaming is a pillar of the electrifica-



traditional level 2 charging. I also expect regulatory support to grow in certain states for the deployment of decentralized energy storage," says Kamal.

Show me the money!

EV drivers can now make cashless payments at Alimentation Couche-Tard-owned EV charging stations thanks to a joint venture with Montreal-based payment tech company Nuvei Corp., and Nayax, a global payment solutions provider.

In a similar vein to streamlining the charging experience, the Visa Acceptance Solutions division has with Sheeva.AI, an in-vehicle payments solutions provider, to introduce a new tokenization platform for secure in-vehicle transactions for various services including EV charging.

Both solutions aim to create a simpler and more seamless payment process to improve user experiences and the efficiency of public charging infrastructure.

Integrated Automotive Experience

Moving even further east, Nova Scotian EV maven Jérémie Bernardin has embarked on a new venture at

Aimed at arming employees with information to answer hard questions, this self-paced, three-hour program covers topics including:

- How much range do you lose in winter?
- What tips and tricks exist to maximize range, especially in winter?
- Can you recycle EV batteries?
- Are EVs environmentally-friendly when considering mining required for their batteries?
- What if the electricity is from coal?
- Are they still a better environmental choice?

By providing these insights, the program empowers employees to address complex inquiries confidently. For more information, write to Jeremie.bernardin@integratedauto.com

Industry launches Agora to drive electric vehicle adoption through EV roaming

Two major Canadian charging networks – The Electric Circuit and BC Hydro – and ChargeHub, a leader in EV roaming solutions, announce the launch of Agora. This industry initiative, aims to accelerate the adoption of EVs

tion of transportation by allowing access to a maximum number of public charging stations, while enabling EV drivers to use their preferred method of activation and payment. To this end, Agora is proposing a bilingual pan-Canadian campaign to promote awareness of the subject not only among the general public, but also among fleet managers and industry players.

Agora offers several features:

- A website to answer key questions about EV roaming
- A tool to find charging networks compatible with the most important mobility services in Canada and the United States
- Statistics on the state of interoperability in Canada, as well as dedicated resources for the industry

"Zero-emission vehicles are helping Canadians to reduce emissions and save money on fuel while creating good jobs throughout the supply chain. Investing in zero-emission vehicles will put more Canadians in the driver's seat on the road to a net-zero future and help achieve our climate goals," said Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources of Canada.

Freewire offers charging solutions

Finally, EV charging and energy solutions provider FreeWire has rapidly and recently expanded its international presence. The company has sold into 10 countries and plans continued expansion in Canada and beyond in 2024, says Senior Communications Manager Sara Dodrill.

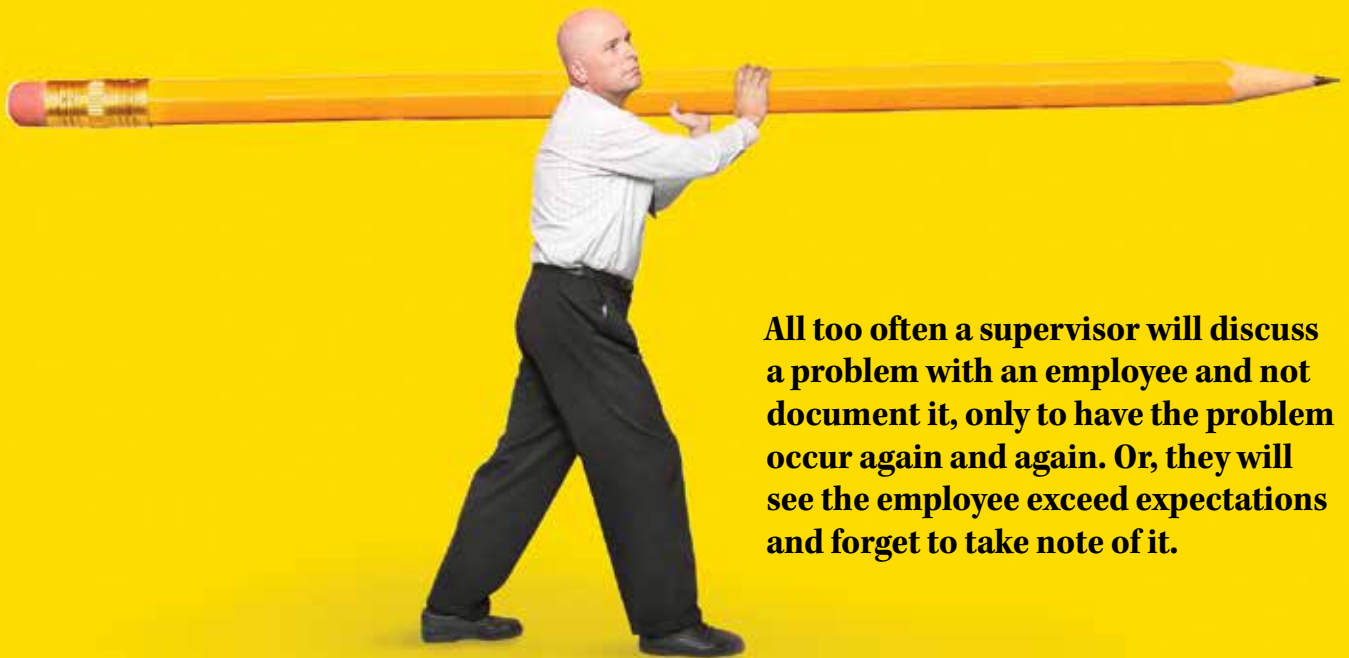
Earlier this year Freewire launched Mobilyze Pro, an AI-enabled platform designed to provide accurate predictions to expand nationwide EV charging infrastructure. The platform is designed to help site hosts meet growing demand for charging infrastructure by providing accurate utilization and profitability forecasts. These tools provide owners of charging infrastructure the resources to compare site locations and hardware solutions, thereby providing confidence in the business case for EV charging and

overcoming a key hurdle to accelerate deployment and access for drivers.

“Power limitations will continue to be a hurdle as EV charging infrastructure proliferates over the next decade,” says Dodrill. “FreeWire offers a technological solution for site hosts by pairing energy storage with ultrafast charging. We believe the need for these next-generation solutions will grow, as will their functionality. Energy storage can be leveraged to provide backup power for sites, alleviate utility bills, and strengthen the electrical grid. These multifunctional assets could not only deliver charging but also provide additional economic benefits and transform our infrastructure into the future.”

Carter Hammett is a Toronto-based writer, editor and social worker. He can be reached at iwriteandedit@yahoo.com.





All too often a supervisor will discuss a problem with an employee and not document it, only to have the problem occur again and again. Or, they will see the employee exceed expectations and forget to take note of it.

“But is it documented?”

By Renee Boyda, CPHR Candidate

Proper documentation is key for an employer to take employment actions such as promotions, bonuses, or disciplinary measures – especially termination. Documentation can take many forms. It can include notes from meetings with employees, follow-up emails summarizing what took place in a performance-related meeting, comments contained in performance reviews, and even disciplinary letters.

Proper documentation creates a permanent record of events, the actions taken and the reason for those actions. But more importantly, documentation



PROPER DOCUMENTATION CREATES A PERMANENT RECORD OF EVENTS, THE ACTIONS TAKEN AND THE REASON FOR THOSE ACTIONS.

informs an employee of the supervisor's expectations and the consequences of failing to meet those expectations and guides the employee's future behaviour. It also assists and justifies the employer in future employment decisions.

Many types of employment actions require documentation. Performance reviews and

discipline are most frequently considered when discussing performance-related meetings. But any discussions with employees regarding safety violations, demotions, promotions,

attendance, changes in job duties, increases, bonuses, probation, or training must be documented. There are instances when you should be particularly cautious and ensure you are documenting carefully. These include accommodation requests, medical leave requests, major policy violations, significant changes

to job duties, harassment or violence claims, layoffs, terminations, or if you notice an emerging pattern of negative behaviour, such as lateness or angry outbursts. These issues require careful maneuvering and precise actions that, if not diligent, could create unnecessary difficulties for employers.

The consequences of not documenting employment actions are numerous. But overall, a lack of documentation equates to scarce evidence for defending employment actions in court, unequal or inconsistent treatment of staff, misinterpretations of what was said in a performance-related meeting, and eventually poor morale due to frustrated coworkers and managers who witness no improvements to poor performance over time.

To be useful, your documentation must be effective. Effective documentation for poor performance will include: who was present at the meeting, the date and time of the meeting, the date and time of the event, a clear description of what happened (answers the who, what, where and when), your expectations, how the employee's actions failed to meet the expectations, the impact >>

EMPLOYEES MUST RECEIVE CLEAR DIRECTION ON THEIR INFRACTION AND WHAT THE CONSEQUENCES WILL BE FOR NOT CORRECTING THE PROBLEM. THEY SHOULD NEVER BE SURPRISED.

WPMA EXPO

Tuesday

ENERGY MARKETERS OF AMERICA

WESTERN STATES
~ Legislative Update
~ Federal Updates

DISASTER PLANNING
~ Prepare Your Business for the Unexpected

INs and OUTs
~ Existing and Upcoming Carbon Compliance Programs

ENERGY REALITIES
~ Evolution or Revolution

February 20-22, 2024

at the Mirage in Las Vegas, Nevada USA

Wednesday - Jesse Watters



Keynote

Host of "*Jesse Watters Primetime*,"
Co-Host of "*The Five*" on Fox News,
and author of the #1
New York Times Best
Selling Book, "*How I
Saved The World.*"



Rebekah Gregory
Boston Marathon Bombing
Survivor



Ladies' Luncheon

Thursday - Stephen Moore



Stephen Moore
Former Senior Economic Adviser
to President Donald Trump



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JUST AS IMPORTANT AS DOCUMENTING POOR PERFORMANCE IS DOCUMENTING EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE!

to the organization (using metrics if possible), the consequence of not meeting the expectations in the future, an action plan outlining what the employee needs to do to meet the expectations with a timeline or deadlines, a reference to prior counselling or discipline for the same matter, and date and time of the follow up meeting.

Effective documentation does *not* include: Vague or unclear wording, using absolute terms such as always and never to describe bad behaviour, using retaliatory phrases, references to previous mistakes or discipline that have no bearing on the issue at hand, or glossing over the issue and avoiding difficult statements to avoid confrontation. Employees must receive clear direction on their infraction and what the consequences will be for not correcting the problem. They should never be surprised.

Just as important as documenting poor performance is documenting excellent performance! This serves several purposes. It provides a record of achievements and strengths, which can be valuable during performance evaluations and promotion considerations. It also helps in recognizing and reinforcing positive contributions, boosting employee morale and motivation. Additionally, having a documented history of positive behaviour can be useful in situations involving team building

and identifying potential candidates for leadership roles within the organization. Remember, positive documentation is not only about recognizing achievements but also about fostering a positive work culture.

To document positive employee work actions effectively, consider these steps: Clearly outline the details of the positive action and specify what the employee did well, use metrics if possible to quantify the positive impact using key performance indicators, document and acknowledge the positive action as close to its occurrence as possible for maximum impact, relate the positive action to workplace goals, and describe the context of the action, explaining the challenges or circumstances that the employee navigated successfully.

Most importantly, whenever you are documenting employment actions (positive or negative) you must maintain confidentiality. Respect the privacy of the employee while documenting any occurrence and share information only as appropriate. Always give an employee an opportunity to improve their bad behaviour and always encourage the positive behaviour. Some of the time spent managing people is filled with difficult conversations. Following these tips will ensure that you are offering consistency, clarity, and proof when handling employee issues. ■

Renee Boyda is a human resources consultant and CPHR Candidate with 10 years of experience in all aspects of human resources in her past roles in both union and non-union environments. Renee received her Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from the University of Manitoba, and received both Human Resource Management and Management Development Certificates with Honours, from Red River College. Renee has completed Investigation Level 1 & 2 through Hill Advisory Services. Renee has built HR structures and processes to create consistency and fairness in several workplaces where little existed prior to her arrival. She is a problem solver who does not shy away from tough conversations and is a calm and knowledgeable presence. Renee is a proud Metis and a highly adaptable personality with a focus on customer service. She can be reached at renee@legacybowes.com.

Gas King Hosts Charity Care Wash Events



Charity
Care Wash




GasKing

Gas King operates gas stations, convenience stores and carwashes in Southern Alberta. Their carwashes are branded Crown Car Wash and being one of the largest self-serve carwash operators in the area they were continually being asked by local charities if they could host their charity car washes to raise money for their organization and because of their commitment to their community they almost always accommodated them.

Gas King President Brent Morris states: "We decided to capitalize on these carwash fundraisers and decided to advertise our willingness to host these events." So, in the Spring of 2000 Gas King branded their program with the clever name Charity Care Wash. Morris continues: "We had a logo designed, displayed an informational pamphlet in our stores and when we introduced our website a year later, included Charity Care Wash information on gasking.com."

Charities can apply online to hold a Charity Care Wash at any conveniently located Crown Car Wash facility. Gas King will provide the organization with the use of a carwash bay, high pressure soap and water. The carwash bay and every available service is free of charge. Store management turns on the carwash system, the organization sets the price and supplies their own chamois, cleaning products, signage and most important...enthusiastic volunteers!

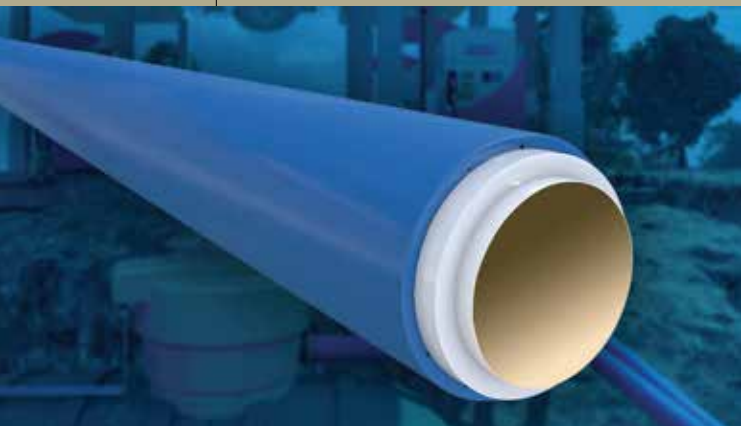
When the Charity Care Wash is approved by the Gas King marketing team, the organizations receive a list of charity carwash marketing tips and also a list of how to advertise their carwash fundraiser free of charge. Gas King also helps promote the charities carwash fundraiser on their social media channels.

Since 2000 Gas King has hosted countless Charity Care Washes every summer and is proud to continue to help many local organizations raise thousands of dollars for their worthwhile causes. 



How Being Flexible Led To The Ultimate Fuel-Transfer Piping Solution

By Ed Kammerer



One of the definitions for the word “flexible” is “ready and able to change so as to adapt to different circumstances.”

In the early 1990s, after many decades of doing the same thing, that’s what the operators of retail-fueling sites, along with the manufacturers who created and provided the fuel-dispensing systems for those sites, were forced to be flexible – and they had to adapt quickly.

The impetus behind this need for change and flexibility was the discovery in the early 1970s that traditional underground fuel-transfer systems were prone to leaking, which was putting water supplies, the overall environment and the general public at risk. The cause of many of these leaks were the steel pipes that were commonly used to connect the system’s various underground components. This revelation essentially made the use of steel pipes in fuel-transfer systems obsolete.

As is their nature, fueling-system manufacturers showed they were indeed “flexible” by quickly coming up with a solution, and their customers were equally as quick to adopt it. By the 1980s, fiber-reinforced plastic (FRP) was being widely used in a number of industries that needed a replacement for steel. For the retail-fueling industry, FRP in the form of rigid pipe had become accepted as a legitimate replacement for steel fuel-transfer pipe, with FRP’s main advantage over steel pipe being the fact that it wouldn’t corrode and leak.

However, rigid pipe did maintain some of the shortcomings of steel pipe: it was difficult and very labor intensive to install, could only be installed in perfect weather conditions and it required glued fittings, tees and elbow joints that could be potential leak points, and if a leak were to occur, concrete would have to be broken on-site and the entire fueling system would need to be excavated in order to replace the leaking or damaged rigid pipe. This could put a strain on the fuel retailer’s bottom line from both a cost – for maintenance, repair, replacement, remediation and, in severe cases, fines or shutdown – while also creating excessive non-revenue-generating downtime for the site as the old piping was removed and the new system installed.

Creating The Ultimate Piping Solution

In no small piece of irony, the eventual answer to the fueling system’s conundrum with leaking steel pipe and the inherent operational shortcomings that carried over to rigid FRP pipe would also pay homage to the word “flexible.” In 1960,

the chemical industry had invented polyvinylidene fluoride (PVDF) resin that was extremely flexible. By the 1990s, the manufacturers of retail-fueling systems had begun using piping constructed of PVDF, which gained it the name "flexible piping." In addition to its flexibility, the PVDF-based piping was a revelation because it was an engineered plastic that also boasted low permeability, exceptional strength and durability, and resistance to aggressive fuels, chemicals, abrasion and high temperatures, all while being recyclable.

Recognizing the benefits that could have in fuel-system pipe construction, in 1996, OPW Retail Fueling, began working to develop its own flex-pipe solution. Specifically, in 1997, OPW released the industry's newest flexible-piping system called the Primary Integrated Secondarily Contained Environmental System, or PISCES. The special sauce in the PISCES solution was a flexible primary pipe liner constructed of PVDF, along with all of the other materials in the pipe

being compatible with motor fuel and bonded together during the extrusion process.

PISCES quickly became the standard in flexible piping for the industry and remained so for 10 years, or until OPW introduced its next generation of flexible piping, which it called the FlexWorks Piping System. Like PISCES was, today FlexWorks is the unquestioned standard in flexible fuel-transfer piping because – from a big-picture perspective – it provides the best possible environmental protection and economic benefits when used in fuel-transfer systems at retail-fueling sites. The proof in the pudding is the fact that FlexWorks flexible piping has been installed at more than 70,000 sites worldwide with more than 15 million feet having been sold.

In addition to its overarching environmental and economic benefits, FlexWorks piping has the following features that help make it a first-choice piping solution:


- Unmatched permeation resistance,

even when used with the most aggressive fuels

- Easier and quicker installation reduces labor time and cost
- Less force required to bend the pipe
- Pipe memory has been reduced to facilitate easier connection of pipes inside sumps
- No hand-built or buried joints
- No on-site cutting, fitting, cleaning, gluing or welding of joints
- Termination points are safely located within sumps for easy access
- Can be replaced or repaired without site excavation when 4" or 6" access pipe is used
- Can be installed in any type of weather (a primary consideration in Canada)
- Reduced weight eases shipping and handling demands and costs
- Comes in a wide range of diameters: 3/4", 1", 1.5", 2", 3", which makes it ideal for use in a wide range of retail setups, including high-volume convenience stores and truck stops
- Can be used in non-traditional applications, such as with fuel oil and generator supply systems

FlexWorks flexible piping has been tested under the UL/ULC-971 standard and certified for use with a complete range of motor fuels, high-blend fuels, concentrated fuels, and aviation and marine fuels, and has achieved third-party approval for use with Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF).

Conclusion

By acknowledging the need for flexibility when the use of steel pipes became untenable in fuel-transfer systems, the industry was able to develop the ultimate flexible solution. Flexible fuel piping has been a godsend, giving its users the highest level of peace of mind while knowing their fueling sites cannot fall prey to dangerously leaking piping. Within the flex-pipe realm, OPW has assumed a leadership position, both with its introduction of PISCES, then the development of the next-generation FlexWorks Piping System that wraps all of the standard-setting features and benefits of OPW flexible piping into one neat, reliable, durable, cost-effective and safe package. 

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. For more information on OPW, go to opwglobal.com.



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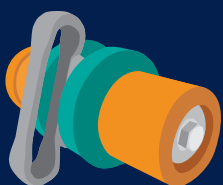
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What's New



Local Convenience Stores Welcome Sale of Beverage Alcohol in Ontario

Toronto - The Convenience Industry Council of Canada (which represents corner store distributors, manufacturers, and retailers across Ontario) provided the following statement in response to Government of Ontario's recent announcement permitting the sale of beverage alcohol in convenience stores. The statement is attributable to Anne Kothawala, president & CEO of the Convenience Industry Council of Canada:

"Today's announcement is welcome news for Ontario's convenience stores. Removing antiquated restrictions on the sale of beer, wine, coolers and ready-to-drink beverages will create new revenue streams for our local businesses and meet customer demands in an increasingly competitive marketplace. This is an important step, and we are committed to working with the government on the specific details on a responsible and successful transition of these new products into our stores

According to economic research prepared for CICC by Cascadia Partners, the retail expansion of beverage alcohol will result in an additional 9,300 new jobs in the province. It is a true win-win-win: For convenience stores, for local producers, and for consumers.

We take our role as responsible retailers seriously. This is how we have built such a strong partnership with the government selling age-restricted products, like tobacco and lottery, in a safe and responsible manner. Our stores and employees pass comprehensive training and already have an excellent track record as responsible retailers passing government run mystery shopping tests at a rate above 98 per cent.

We commend the government for providing Ontarians with the convenience they want, while also giving thousands of Ontario retailers and producers opportunities to secure and grow their businesses."

Washworld, Inc. Announces New Distributor

DE PERE, Wisconsin: Washworld is proud to announce they have recently added a new member to their distributor network. Car Wash Chemical Solutions will be selling and servicing Washworld vehicle wash systems throughout Georgia.

Washworld, Inc. proudly manufactures Razor, Razor EDGE, Razor Double Barrel and Razor XR-7 touch-free carwash systems as well as

Profile MAX, ProfileST and Profile LXR soft touch carwash systems. New to the vehicle wash lineup is Profile Apex, which gives you the best of both worlds by giving you the freedom to offer totally touch-free experience, entirely soft touch experience or a hybrid combination of both.

For more information, please visit www.wash-worldinc.com.

Liquid Barcodes Achieves Loyalty Partner Certification with Verifone

Liquid Barcodes becomes Verifone's certified loyalty partner, enabling seamless integration with Verifone's POS terminals

FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA – Liquid Barcodes, a global leader in loyalty, subscription, and pump activation solutions for convenience and fuel retailers announces that global FinTech leader Verifone certifies Liquid Barcodes as a certified loyalty partner.

This partnership will enhance the Liquid Barcodes relationship with Verifone, including Verifone's approval to use their point-of-sale (POS) terminals with all of Liquid Barcodes' many loyalty, subscription, and payment programs. Verifone's POS solutions are used by over half of the 150,000-plus U.S. convenience stores and fuel retailers.

Saurabh Swarup, Liquid Barcodes general manager for North America, underscores the significance of the Verifone certification "as a pivotal milestone in our strategy. This achievement aligns with our commitment to deliver world-class loyalty and subscription programs to engage U.S. customers, fostering growth in the beverage and foodservice sectors. Our integration with diverse industry players equips Liquid Barcodes

customers with the tools to automate business processes and streamline operations in the new digital economy."

Verifone Certified Loyalty Partner Integrated Features

- Subscription Support
- Points and Stamps Accumulation
- Diverse Offer Validations
- User Identification
- Fuel-Triggered Coupons
- Loyalty Coexistence
- Local Discount Coexistence

With the Verifone mobile payment processing application (MPPA) certification, Liquid Barcodes merchants can leverage Verifone's robust global e-commerce payment platform within the app, allowing seamless and secure omnichannel sales experiences for both merchants and consumers.

With the Verifone and Liquid Barcodes software fully integrated, customers of either company can activate this functionality by working with Liquid Barcodes to quickly create a personalized mobile app. For retailers with existing mobile apps, this feature is a plug-and-play API that integrates into the app seamlessly, delivering the same experience to end users. Learn more at LiquidBarcodes.com.



Aquadetox International Names Vero Solutions Inc. as North American Distributor

Burlington, Ontario - Vero Solutions Inc. is officially launching the unique aquadetox water recycling/water treatment products for the carwash industry throughout North America.

aquadetox provides state-of-the-art biological water reclaim and water treatment systems to over 6,500 clients in Europe, UK, Australia, and Japan. They are launching their product line in North America at the CARWACS Show in Toronto March 5,6, 2024, and The Car Wash Show in Nashville, Tennessee May 13-15, 2024, in the Innovation Alley area.

"We are pleased to work with Vero Solutions Inc. to represent us in North America to bring our high-quality products to market," said Robert Widler, director of North America at aquadetox International, Germany.

aquadetox International is committed to the preservation of water on a global level. With over 30 years of engineering expertise, the non-chemical (biological) process used to clean wastewater into clean water saving carwash owner clients over 90 per cent of their water usage and costs. The treated water is clean enough to be utilized throughout the whole car wash process, reducing the need for numerous tanks and equipment.

aquadetox International are a certified international vendor to Mercedes-Benz, BMW, and Audi Corporate. aquadetox North America is a Canadian Car Wash Association vendor and International Car Wash Association member.

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With an impressive assortment of nationally recognized products, unparalleled forecourt and QSR offerings, and a desirable brand that resonates with commuters, ON the RUN convenience stores continue to aggressively expand to meet demand. Right now, there are over 600 Marché Express and ON the RUN stores in Canada, plus we are well on our way to achieving our goal of 800 locations by 2025.

