

# UTA INDUSTRY WATCH

Volume 4, Issue 1

Contact the UTA @ 1-877-GETS-UTA or [www.uta.org](http://www.uta.org)

February 2003

## President's Message...

January brought not only the start of the New Year but also the beauty of winter and the anticipation of spring to come.

Our industry embarks on an era of new challenges. We start this journey with challenges such as high costs of fuel, lack of retail financing support, smaller percentage of qualified buyers, shortage of certain truck makes and models of trucks and an overabundance of higher mileage trucks.

We ask ourselves: "Why are we in this business?" Because we love it, that's why. With all these obstacles we **will** find the way to do our jobs and service our customers as we have in the past. This year, as in the past, we will have to be a little smarter, have a little more ingenuity and preserve a positive attitude. We must look at each challenge, break it down and find a way to combat it at our level.

- + The price of fuel: We have no control over the cost of fuel but there are areas that we can help our customers offset it. First, we can educate them using the UTA's *Low Mileage* brochure. We can make sure the truck we are selling is capable of getting the maximum fuel mileage. We can explain the matter of idling and give tips on how to minimize idle time. We can tell our customers about the new climate control generators on the market. To request additional copies of this brochure, log on to our website [www.uta.org](http://www.uta.org)
- + Lack of retail financing support: There **are** financing companies out there. We independents are having a harder time with this than the franchise dealers, but that has always been the case. The key here is to find a source, develop a relationship and work hard on maintaining that relationship. Find out what fits their portfolio and do your paperwork completely. Once you find out what they need, do it every time. Completed documents with correct, complete and factual information is the number one need and hot button for finance companies.
- + Qualified buyers: With the hardships that have plagued this industry over the past few years, the independent owner operators have been hurt dramatically. Even though many have damaged credit it doesn't necessarily make them a bad risk buyer. We have to take the time to find out their particular situations and go the extra mile to make it fit anyway possible. I've found that a little extra time has been rewarding for both my customer and me. Someone has to

help these guys. They are all our future buyers.

- + Shortage of truck makes and models: This is nothing new to any of us. Once again, going the extra mile, building relationships and doing what you say you will do, pays off. Having dealers or buyers call you when a truck becomes available is invaluable. Being the type of person someone thinks about when that person has a need is important. Moving a customer to a different type truck requires a trusting relationship.
- + Overabundance of higher mileage trucks: This is a reality. We have this to deal with. Once again, we have to educate our buyers. The manner in which we recondition trucks is also a large factor. Putting lipstick and rouge on is not the answer. It is important to know clearly what you are buying or trading for in order to plan for realistic reconditioning costs.

Warranties will give you the biggest reward in selling higher mileage trucks. Taking the time to school the buyer on how to maintain the higher mileage truck is important also. Some do not know there is a difference in maintaining a newer truck and an older one. Recommending a certain type of haul is an option also.

We all have the answers if we take the time to reach within or seek help from our colleagues. This is the most important part of belonging to the UTA - there is always someone to call for help! Relationships, networking and keeping a positive attitude are the keys.

Jean Paul Getty said his formula for success was to "Rise early, work late and **strike oil**." Mine is to "Rise early, work late, find a way to sell higher mileage trucks and **get them financed**."

The UTA appreciates you as a member and **THANKS** you in advance for bringing a new member to the organization.

-- Eddie Walker  
UTA President



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How are **YOU** supporting the UTA?

## SHARE YOUR NEWS

UTA Industry Watch is published monthly. Submissions, ideas and comments are most welcome.

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# Congratulations Graduates



The Used Truck Association would like to congratulate the latest graduates of its "Fundamentals of Used Truck Sales" training session, held Jan. 13-16, 2003 in Tampa, FL. These sales associates have completed the intensive four-day workshop that has prepared them for successful careers in commercial used truck sales. Good Luck to each of you and your dealers.

(From left to right) **Scott Brockman**, International Truck and Engine Corporation, Dallas, TX, UTC; **Humberto Larranaga**; Kenworth Mexicana, Mexicali, Mexico; **Paul Gowland**, Parish Truck Sales, St. Rose, LA; **Jeff Hacker**, TransAdvantage, St. Louis, MO; **Stephanie Gomez**, J.B. Pavelka, Inc. Robstown, TX; **Brian Becker**, Wieland International, Bay City, MI; **Gary Schlickemayer**, St. Cloud Truck Sales, St. Cloud, MN; **Steve Belknap**, Trucks and Parts, Tampa, FL.

## *In Memoriam*

**Jerry Gerber**, vice president of House of Trucks, Hinsdale, IL, died in late January at the age of 55. "It is a tremendous loss," said House of Trucks president Jim Rys. "Jerry was an honest, stable force; my right hand for 18 years." Donations in Jerry Gerber's honor may be made to the American Lung Association.

# Endowment Fund Begun

The UTA has taken another giant step forward with the announcement of the UTA/Jerome Nerman Family Foundation. This fund has been formed to establish grants for college level students.

We have established this endowment and will fund it for five years before making any disbursements, allowing it to grow and flourish. Members and non-members alike may contribute to this not-for-profit fund and take a tax deduction for their contribution. What a nice way to say Happy Birthday or Happy Anniversary, or do something special in honor or memory of someone within your family or organization. Receipts for this tax-deductible contribution will be available.

The plan is to then offer grants out of the growth of the fund, never touching the principal.

When the time comes, selections for recipients of the grants will be made by an outside non-affiliated organization. Children of any UTA board member will not be eligible while the board member is serving.

The UTA is looking for ways to raise the bar, so if any one has ideas how we can raise more money for this fund, we want to hear from you.

The vision, and the first contribution to this fund, are another example of Jerry Nerman's way of giving back to an industry that has served him well. Jerry and his wife Margaret have set many trends in the Used Truck Industry over the years - too many to mention.

The one thing that stands out is Jerry's determination to elevate the entire industry to the next level. With honesty, integrity, determination, along with his generosity in starting this Endowment, we can help take this to levels of which he will be proud.

Be uplifted about your association as we continually promote ideas for the betterment of our industry. Help us grow by showing this to your friends and business associates and encourage them to join your UTA.

## **Reinvent Your Leadership**

As you evolve into a leader in our business, your ability to navigate the terrain internally and externally will have a significant impact on how rich your experience will be and how far you will ascend. To maneuver this terrain, start by reflecting inward as to the depth of your abilities, knowledge, training, experience, passion, desires and hopes. Then reinvent.

"I send my new salespeople to training" is often heard, but rarely do I hear, "we do continuous training." Have you been endowed with the omnipotence of the selling process, marketing development or revenue generation?

Insist in excellence of yourself before requiring it of subordinates. Enroll in no less than one training program a year, expanding your abilities and knowledge. Do not circumvent the "basic" programs; we all need a tune up.

Ask, "why not?" Almost everything you don't do is the result of fear. Had fear driven my decision four years ago to a blind date, today that woman would not be my wife.

Nearly everything you don't do has no good reason for it. No one else was doing a value guide specific to horse trailers so "why not" do one? We did, but it languished in the beginning. A management change questioned the need for its continuation. I asked "why not" continue the guide? The result has been doubled sales year over year for two years.

Argue forcefully against your most dearly held beliefs. Only then will you know if they stand up to scrutiny. Shift what you think to what is known.

Listen twice as much as you speak. Ideas are free and come from anywhere, particularly new employees. They bring in experience untainted by the company's culture.

Find things just not done in your industry or market and then go ahead and do them. For example: A man named Stew Leonard took strawberries out of the green plastic containers and let customers pick their own. Sales doubled. Weir International found success with a medium duty tow vehicle for the RV, horse and racecar trailer markets with the Towmaster. Arrow Truck Sales realized opportunity in converting tractors into mobile home totes.

Eliminate the Doppelganger Effect. That is where a leader creates clones among his "lieutenants" or selects key assistants who resemble him in ideas and attitudes. The result is a leader likely to see only selective information or ideas the key assistants decide the leader should see.

A leader must work hard to have diversity of ideas and have people tell the truth, and then willingly hear what is said.

Finally, startle people. Move out of your comfort zone. Do something unexpected. Run an offbeat ad. Spiff a salesperson by cooking and paying for a barbecue dinner at their place. Instead of casual Friday, make it margarita Friday the first Friday of the month.

I hope these few ideas will create an "Ah-Hah Factor," taking action where you need to act.

*Terry Williams  
UTA Board Member  
Truck Blue Book*

# MARK YOUR CALENDAR

NOVEMBER 2003						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

**4th Annual**  
**UTA CONVENTION**  
**November 6-8, 2003**  
**Palm Coast Golf Resort,**  
**Palm Coast, Florida**

**- Quintessential Quote -**

“Age is not important unless you’re a cheese.”  
*Helen Hayes. American actress.*

## Professional Used Truck Management

**March 4 - 6, 2003**  
**Kansas City, MO**



The purpose of this UTA training course is to assist used truck managers, sales managers and general managers in developing a responsive and profitable used truck business.

Cost of the course is \$545 for UTA members; \$645 for non members. Materials fee is \$29.

To register, or for additional information on this or other UTA training programs, contact Heavy Duty Marketing Associates (HDMA) at 1-866-454-4362 or visit the UTA web site at [www.uta.org](http://www.uta.org).