



The way I see it...

BY PAUL KINDINGER

Your associations at work – helping dealers succeed!

NOT often do you hear me talk about our accomplishments, but this month I chose to make an exception. Why? A recent event demonstrates how seriously we take our motto, “Helping Dealers Succeed.” The event, at least in my mind, also serves to demonstrate that your investment in us, in the form of annual dues, is just that, an investment that reaps rewards and returns.

The example I am referring to is a situation where one of the major manufacturers asked its dealers to sign a new finance agreement. Several dealers associated with the manufacturer called NAEDA affiliates seeking advice and expressing concerns about how the agreement differs from the current one and how it might impact their business. The affiliates, in turn, contacted NAEDA and together we contacted our legal counsel, Siegfried, Bingham, Levy, Selzer and Gee (SBLSG). SBLSG/NAEDA Legal Counsel Jack Selzer and his team analyzed the new agreement and spotted many issues that could have an adverse impact on the dealer.

NAEDA and affiliates devised a plan of action, contacted the company and began discussions about possible remedies to minimize adverse impacts. From that point forward, the affiliate associations kept dealers in the loop. NAEDA and affiliates sought feedback and input from dealers and provided that input to SBLSG. From there we had intensive discussions with the manufacturer about the need for changes in the agreement including specific changes in language to provide clarity and fairness to dealers.

The outcome, with the cooperation of all parties, dealers, affiliates, legal counsel, NAEDA, and the manufacturer, was a testimony to the process. The revised agreement, while less than “perfect,” is vastly improved and in the words of the manufacturer is, “a better agreement for all parties.” This process reminds us of the kind of relationships that are necessary to accomplish something of this magnitude and demonstrates how NAEDA and affiliates work on behalf of all dealers to (as our mission statement states) “create the best business environment ...” and help you succeed.

This is just one example of what is taking place behind the scenes on your behalf every day. While this negotiation was taking place, two very similar situations were being handled by OPE dealers and some of the affiliate associations.

By now you probably expect that I am going to say, “The bottom line is this.” Well get ready! The bottom line *is* this: Only you can decide if the investment in affiliate and NAEDA dues is worth it. And while

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you are deciding, consider that this one instance alone could save several dealers their dealership. At a minimum, it removes much dealer worry that would have resulted had the original proposal (which was far more onerous and potentially harmful to individual dealers) not been modified.

My three take-away points to you are these:

- 1) Having a network of associations at your disposal to handle sensitive issues that impact many dealers is worthy of your investment.
- 2) NAEDA and its affiliated associations accomplish what individual dealers cannot do alone. Few dealers have the time, expertise or money to take on such an extensive process as we just undertook. In this single instance, hundreds of hours by many individuals and tens of thousands of dollars were put into this effort on your behalf by your associations.
- 3) There are still a few dealers who ride your coattails and don't pay annual dues. This is where you can help. Let's face it, we would be stronger with them and have even more resources to invest on your behalf if they were members. Let them know that NAEDA and affiliate associations work for *all* dealers, achieving great results and providing tremendous benefits in terms of saving time, money and stress for individual dealers.

As I said initially, we don't often toot our own horn, but sometimes we all need reminders. I felt this one success story was worth sharing and is merely one example among many that take place every day, week, month, and year by affiliates and NAEDA working together to help you succeed. I thought you would appreciate knowing what's happening with your investment. We sincerely hope you will agree that membership is a wise investment and the returns are enormous – and that's the way I see it! ■

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