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May/June 2013

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Arkansas Automotive Recycler

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AADRA Meeting Minutes

Conference Call - April 12, 2013

Conference call began at 5:00 pm AADRA directors and members present on the call were: Stacy Wylie, Chris Sargent, Tracy Sargent, Steffeny Palmer, R.D. Hopper, Mike Strop, Adam Pratt, Susie McCoy, James West, Perry Harston, and Jenifer Kirkland.

Stacy introduced and suggested that Perry Harston be added and elected to the Board of Directors as the "Environmental Director" for AADRA. This will enable Perry to better represent us as an association as well as to help individual yards. Chris Sargent made a motion to elect Perry to the Board of Directors, Mike Strop seconded the motion, all in attendance voted "yes" –motion carried.

Stacy suggested that we need someone to take care of and gather information for our bi-monthly newsletter and get turned in to R.J. McClellan in a timely manner, Chris nominated Jenifer Kirkland for the position because she is already our convention director, and is familiar with all that needs to be done pertaining to this. It was brought up that she be compensated per newsletter and to be the 2014 Convention Director, to be paid six months before the convention, and to be paid at the close of the 2014 convention. Stacy made a motion to hire Jenifer for this, Chris seconded, and all in attendance voted "yes" and the motion carried.

Stacy opened the discussion on where and when to have the 2014 Convention, after discussion from all in attendance it was decided to have the 2014 Convention in Hot Springs, AR and have it in the month of June at the Embassy Suites Hotel, Stacy also suggested that this time we have the Trade Show and dinner at the Embassy Suites Hotel by utilizing meeting rooms instead of the much larger and more expensive Convention Hall.

Stacy said he will call and get rates for rooms and a place to hold the Trade Show and get back with the Convention Committee at a later date.

Mike Strop made a motion for the meeting to adjourn and Chris Sargent seconded, the conference call was adjourned at 5:56pm.

A Note from the President

By Stacy Wylie, AADRA President

It's a beautiful spring day which makes it real hard to stay focused at work. The fish are biting, birds are chirping and the pollen is flying. The last thing you want to do is inventory cars, answer phone calls at the counter and manage your recycling facility. But, now is the time to get busy. When the temperature rises, sales usually rise with it. Just remember as you get busier, keep your employees thinking green. Trap those nasty oil spills and keep things clean.

AADRA is continually concerned about the safety of the environment. AADRA now has an opportunity to add Perry Harston of HazCom Management, Inc. as Environmental Director. Perry would be a great a benefit to AADRA and its members. He currently helps many members with there storm water plans keeping them in compliance with the state. In this role, Perry will be available to assist with environmental issues and keep AADRA members up to date concerning government legislation. Watch future newsletters for updates concerning this addition.

Many thanks to all members who have invested time and effort into the recent legislative activities. See R.D. Hopper's article for the most recent update on these activities.

Planning for the 2014 convention is underway. More information to come in future newsletters. Feel free to communicate requests/suggestions to an AADRA board member regarding things you would like to see/learn at the convention. Your input will assist us as we choose speakers and topics. As you talk with your vendors, express to them the networking opportunity available by participating in the 2014 AADRA convention.

Looking forward to providing more updates on these topics in the next newsletter. Until then, stay safe and green.

Regards,
Stacy Wylie
President, Arkansas Automotive Dismantlers and Recyclers Association

The Value of Customer Service: It Can Make You or Break You

By Patrick McClure

Thank Your Customers

What impact can one person have on the revenue performance of a large supermarket? Is it possible that one person can create a company-wide impact, sending shock waves of good cheer and driving ever-increasing repeat business? How can one person make such a difference?

The following story was relayed to me by Barbara Glanz, a world-renowned professional speaker who delivers programs about how to create Legendary Customer service.

It was two days after she delivered one of her programs to a large supermarket chain when she received a telephone call from a 19-year old youngster – Johnny – who had Down syndrome. He bagged groceries at the supermarket. He told Barbara that he really enjoyed her program and had some ideas to make a difference in his company and wanted to know if she would approve. He wanted to create personal messages, handwritten, with inspirational ideas and thoughts and then wanted to drop these ideas into the grocery bags of his customers. Each of his customers would receive a message from Johnny. Barbara told him she thought this was a great idea, and with his manager's approval that is what he did.

Two weeks later, Barbara received a call from the store manager. He reported that he now had a problem....there were long lines of people waiting at the cash register that Johnny was working. When he tried to move the customers into another less crowded line, they insisted on staying where they were. They wanted Johnny to bag their groceries, and to get his message.

Johnny's actions inspired others in the store. The flower merchant began handing out spare flowers to young children and older ladies. The butcher wrapped his meat in special packages; the produce manager went out of his way to treat customers with special care. The entire store caught fire with a storm of amazing care and attention

to their customers. Bottom line, the store traffic and revenues saw a huge boost, going on to become the most profitable store in the entire chain.

Delivering excellent customer service is not only personally gratifying, but it is immensely profitable. Thanking your customers, showing your appreciation in many small ways, is just good business. How many of you are working in firms, or for your own company, that need to adopt a similar strategy? How many Johnnys work at YOUR firm?

Statistics Show

Statistics show that it is far more expensive to acquire a new customer than to retain an existing customer. One of my clients, a medical device company, has estimated that their fully burdened cost of acquiring a qualified LEAD for their product is over \$1000. When you add to this the sales and market costs as well as all other expenses involved, the total costs can be quite large. It's time consuming, expensive, and very costly to acquire new customers. Once they have become customers, your company should be doing everything possible to retain them, by delivering excellent customer service.

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Conversely, an upset customer is 5-10 times more likely to broadcast their dissatisfaction to the world. All of the good work you do can be negated by one thoughtless comment, one angry word, and one negative comment. In today's social media world – everything connected to the internet – a negative customer service experience is easily shared with thousands of people and can actually go “viral” when it is broadcast to thousands.

The most successful companies have developed programs to deliver excellent customer service, and are doing everything possible to protect their market share. After all, there are dozens of competitors that would love to take your customers away, and all they need is the opportunity. Don't give them the chance! Keep your customers happy!

In Focused or Customer Focused

Another key to successful customer relations is infusing your company to the core with the principals of quality customer service. Every member of your team—executive, manager, employee – has the responsibility to deliver first-rate service to your customers.

There is a huge difference between a company that is inwardly-focused and That is customer focused. Here are some distinctions:

Characteristic	Inward Focused Company
Recognition	Based on personal accomplishments
Focus	Employees focus on making their managers
Training	Trained on Job Functions
Decisions	Top down behind closed doors
Politics	Lots of internal in-fighting and jockeying for promotions
Promotion	Based on Seniority and favoritism

Characteristic	Customer Focused Company
Recognition	Earned on balance between personal accomplishments and customer satisfaction
Focus	Employees focus on making their customers happy
Training	Trained on job functions and customer relationship skills
Decisions	Participative, includes feedback on customer issues not just internal
Politics	Focus on customers, no time for internal politics
Promotion	Based on service skills, teamwork, seniority and customer satisfaction

See if you can spot where YOUR company fits. If you're spending all your time thinking about internal issues, you're headed for disaster. Remember, your customers are paying your salary and if you're not working sincerely to earn their trust and support, they can always take their business elsewhere.

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One more point: when we use the word “customer” we are talking about your outside customers as well as your inside customers. If you are a manager, you are working daily with employees and all of the customer service skills you have developed apply equally to your employees. In many ways, if you are a manager your most important “customer” is a direct report.

Active Listening

We’ve all heard one of the core maxims in providing excellent customer service: “The customer is always right.” This is used during training and by management to convey the important concept that when a customer is upset or concerned, it never works to argue with them or discount what they are saying. What it REALLY means is that the customer’s perception of what occurred is correct for them, regardless of what you think. Their experience, and how they feel about it, is the most important factor to be dealt with, and it must be listened to and understood.

If the customer is angry, their impression of what just occurred has lead them to respond with anger, regardless of your impression. This is not the time to react, but it is a time to put yourself into their place and actively listen to what their viewpoint is. You will never be able to deliver excellent service if you REACT to the customer or immediately conclude they are stupid, ignorant or unrealistic.

Whenever you react and make a snap decision about someone else, this decision will color how you view that person. It’s like your mind is a huge magnifying glass and it will automatically seek out the character traits that you’ve decided must be there! If you perceive that the customer in front of you is messy and disorganized, then you will automatically assume their entire life must be the same way. If you feel insulted by what the other person has said, then you will project this feeling on them and the situation will worsen.

The alternative is Active Listening, a much needed skill in the business world. This requires the following steps:

1. Shut up, stop talking.
2. Focus your attention on the other person, calmly and professionally.
3. Listen to their verbal communication, as well as their emotions and attitudes. Train yourself to become very perceptive with the non-verbal messages that we all project.
4. Ask questions to clarify as needed. Listen.
5. Paraphrase, clarify or summarize what they said to make absolutely certain you received what they said and what they meant. You will be amazed at discovering how often you didn’t fully grasp what was said.

Remember, active listening is not about you. It’s all about the other person, so get out of yourself and put your focus and attention on them. Good communication and active listening skills are the core component of delivering excellent customer service.

The founder of one of the most successful (and largest) companies in the world had this to say:

“Our Goal as a company is to have customer service that is not just the best, but legendary.”

Sam Walton, Wal-Mart

Final Thoughts

According to Dana Borowka, CEO of Lighthouse Consulting Services, LLC (www.lighthouseconsulting.com) and author of *Cracking the Personality Code* (www.crackingthepersonalitycode.com) hiring the right people is key to future growth. If you would like additional information on raising the hiring bar, please click here to see an article on this subject: <http://lighthouseconsulting.org/Articles/KOTHireRightFirstTime/>

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How Your Customers View Value

By Christine Corelli

Interesting work on customer value is being done by Japanese quality expert Professor Noriaki Kano. After extensive research, he concluded that customers experience value at three different dimensions:

Basic value expected and unanticipated. Basic value would be defined as the aspects of product and service delivery that are fundamental (in the customer's mind) to the service or product they're buying. For example, in the airline industry, the basics would be an air-conditioned cabin, a lavatory and a safe plane. These basics do not come into play for customer loyalty and if you don't deliver the basics, you are in deep trouble.

Expected value: These are the things customers are accustomed to receiving from your business. For example, for an airline passenger, expected value would be on-time flight arrival, hot coffee and free drinks (Who knows how long that will last?) courteous light attendants, and frequent flier programs. Airlines are mostly equal on these expected services, so the loyalty advantage gained from providing expected value would be zero.

Unanticipated Value: Unexpected value breeds customer loyalty and customer advocacy. In the airline industry, it could come from waiving the \$150. fee that is charged for changing a ticket, but they just don't do it. Most often, it is delivered by a flight attendant who goes out of his or her way to be exceptionally friendly, helpful, and attentive to serving all passengers. It would be one who makes economy cabin passengers be treated the same way as 1K.

This isn't Rocket Science. It's simple. But if you want to be best at what you do, gather your team. Discuss basic value

and the expected value for customers in your business. Then, brainstorm specific ways to deliver unanticipated value. Meanwhile, here are a few ways to provide unanticipated value.

1. Help customers even when there's nothing in it for you.
2. Offer a money-saving value-added package your competitors do not offer
3. Over-communicate with customers. Few people expect that these days.
4. Find ways to wow the experience in every touch point of the customer experience.
5. Provide far more knowledge than customers would ever anticipate.
6. Bend over backwards for customers.
7. Deliver something extra that they didn't expect.
8. Deliver something for free.
9. Be exceptionally more friendly than any competitor.
10. Overcompensate when you err.
11. Make every customer feel like a VIP.
12. Provide an educational session for your customer on how to grow their business or do something better.

Add specific ways applicable to your business. Make decisions on best practices you will implement that will deliver unexpected value for your customers. The more you do, the better your ability to obtain higher levels of customer loyalty and customer advocacy.

If you have interest in leadership training, call (847) 581 9968.

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AADRA Legislative Report

By RD Hopper
AADRA Parliamentarian

Last month we addressed the issue of obtaining salvage at a reasonable price and what efforts were being made to help this to happen. Unfortunately the bill we were working to get passed, HB1537, did not get out of the transportation committee. Among our current legislators there is a general attitude that they do not want government to stop any individual from doing anything they want to do without any restrictions. This is seen as "free trade". The only problem with this is that it is unfair trade. Individuals who cannot and will not be able to process vehicles in a safe and proper manner are not under any regulations. Businesses, competing in the same arena with individuals, are heavily regulated and spend hundreds of thousands of dollars in compliance, equipment and labor costs. Let's not be naïve enough to think this attitude has not been influenced by large amounts of time and effort spent by the opposition because it most definitely has been.

We continue to learn from our experiences and from other states that have and are successfully fighting this same battle. We are working to build a coalition of support for the future and we will be back in the next session. We intend to work harder and work smarter to win this battle the next time around.

ARA directors went to Washington, D.C. last month to meet with Todd Brighton and Kim Bright with NMVTIS, Bureau of Justice Assistance for the Department of Justice. This meeting went very well. Todd and Kim agreed that the original intent of NMVTIS was to trace all salvage vehicles to their final destination. They said if removing the 5 vehicle reporting exemption improved the integrity of the NMVTIS database they would not oppose such a change. ARA is continuing to pursue this and we may be getting close to closing the gate to unreporting buyers.

AADRA and ARA both need your help and support to fight for our industry. If we don't stand up for it I assure you no one else will. If you are not a member of AADRA or ARA, please join us and become a part of the solution.

"Never plan to lose." Jim Velos

Thank you,

RD Hopper, Director AADRA

At Large Director, Governmental Affairs, ARA

Chair, NMVTIS Work Group, ARAz

Arkansas Automotive Dismantlers & Recyclers Association Membership Application



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Playing the Technology Card Making It Work For You

By: Michelle Keadle-Taylor

You've heard it all before. The automotive industry's number one gripe is that it is becoming very difficult to obtain quality salvage — thanks to the Internet. You've also heard that in order to expand your business and stay competitive as we go into the future, you'll need to embrace the age of technology and use it to your advantage.

Whether you see technology and its constant changes as a friend or a foe, it's here to stay. So, you might as well make it work to your advantage and increase your business. That's exactly what Tom's Foreign Auto Parts in Waterbury, Connecticut has done.

Wednesday, May 8, 2013 will mark ten years since Tom's Foreign Auto Parts began using eBay and over the years they have learned how to use the Internet and social media sites to greatly enhance their business. In fact, eBay has become their biggest outlet for used parts sales on the Internet and will continue to be so in the future according to Jim Eitvydas, President, Tom's Foreign Auto Parts.

"We are always looking for new ways to sell more parts in more places," said Eitvydas, "Our future depends on technology and

Internet sales. More and more, do-it-yourself customers and shops are using the Internet to find parts. We will make sure that we are where they look when they are looking."

Not one to shy away from technology and the endless opportunities it offers, Eitvydas started using eBay ten years ago. His wife, Diane, started their eBay business by selling owners' manuals on it. They sold over 700 owners' manuals in the first year alone and realized they were on to something. After two years, they hired an employee to work full-time on eBay. That employee, Dan Tole, E-Commerce Manager for Tom's Foreign Auto Parts, joined the team and has been expanding the opportunities (along with two other employees) for e-commerce ever since.

"Jimmy hired me when I was about 22 years old," explained Tole. "I had worked on and off at Tom's Foreign Auto Parts as a teenager. My father had known Jimmy when they were younger and also worked here part-time. When Jimmy hired me I had been working at a parts store, building computers and selling on eBay myself. Between Jimmy and myself, I don't think there has ever been a time we have been afraid to try something new in regards to the Internet or technology."

One of the ways that Tom's Foreign Auto Parts makes technology work for them is to use it to automate repetitive tasks such as pictures, YouTube videos, updating online inventory, modifying inventory, making price changes, and more. They use custom programs for inventory, ordering, and narrating videos of all of their parts vehicles.

"Why waste time doing tasks computers can do for us?" asked Eitvydas. "We find that by using these custom programs, it helps us to sell more parts."

"Our most used custom program is for images," said Tole. "We are able to use wireless cameras and bar coding to take



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pictures and automatically upload them into our inventory system as well as onto multiple market places. We knew that having pictures of every part was becoming extremely important, but the time to manually rename them and move them around our network was a bottle neck for us. Now we make it a point to take a minimum of three images of every part our staff handles. Pictures sell parts online. It allows us to set customer expectation before the sale by showing them exactly what they are getting.

Tole says that video has also become important to their online customers. They take a narrated video of every car they inventory and post it to YouTube. Then, they use a custom program to log the YouTube embedded codes so that they can automatically insert them into part listings around the Internet. According to Tole, they currently have over 3,000 videos on YouTube and are just weeks away from hitting one million video views.

Posting videos to YouTube evolved as their eBay business expanded. "As our eBay business grew we started to look for more opportunities to reach our customers online and describe our parts better," said Tole.

"Sales-wise eBay is the biggest outlet for used parts for us and will continue to be for the foreseeable future," said Eitvydas. "Amazon is the fastest growing Internet site but offers a lot of challenges for used parts. It's been good for us, but on a much smaller scale. Craigslist has helped us get a lot of local traffic and allows us to link directly to our Web site. It has to be used in moderation though, to keep from getting posts pulled or banned.

"I think for anyone wanting to increase the way they use the Internet for sales, I would encourage them to not be afraid of trying new smaller market places as you find them," says Eitvydas "Ultimately creating your own e-commerce site has the best long term benefits. Our own e-commerce Web site Tom'sForeign.com has been extremely successful. We sell exactly the same parts on that site as we sell on eBay and Amazon.

"In order to have you own successful e-commerce Web site you must be willing to put effort into it. This doesn't mean building a site with a few pages and using a different company's dynamic look to make yours look interesting. The best results will be from a full-fledged e-commerce site, rich with updated content. Content is the key to getting your site found online."

As technology changes, there are more and more opportunities for recyclers to attract potential business. Yet, although it offers exciting and endless opportunities, many recyclers may find that they are still reluctant to take the time to make it really work for them or they simply may not be sure how to maximize technology to increase their profits.

The team at Tom's Foreign Auto Parts has learned that a key to maximizing their presence on the Internet is diversification. They have put their business on all the social media sites they can. They have created an e-commerce Web site that provides fresh content and is updated regularly. They also are on eBay, Amazon, Craigslist and any other social media site they can find.

"You have to work social media," said Eitvydas. "Used parts are not exciting, but you have to find ways to make your business exciting and interesting to your followers. Give them a reason to follow you. Be consistent and deliver content to your customers daily. No online marketplace is a 'set it and forget it' deal. It constantly needs to be monitored, added to, revamped, and updated."

Razorback Scrap Report

04/04/2013 *Approximate Pricing*

Aluminum Brakage	\$0.22/lb.
Batteries	\$0.29/lb.
Brass, Red	\$2.05/lb.
Brass, Yellow	\$1.10/lb.
Copper, #1	\$3.05/lb.
Copper, #2	\$2.80/lb.
Dirty Motors (Cast)	\$215/net ton
Lead Wheel Weights	\$0.33/lb.
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Aluminum Wheels Clean	\$16.00/ea.
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Crushed Car Bodies	\$200/net ton
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**This Report is for the sole purpose of informing members of current metal market activity.*

***These prices are provided by: U.S.A. Metal Recycling and are intended as a guideline only F.O.B. Lowell, Arkansas. Call 479-751-3000 for a quote. www.usametalrecycling.com*

The Internet thrives on fresh content, suggests Eitvydas. "Having a dynamic parts search will not get you traffic, but fresh content will. You also cannot rely on just eBay or your Web site alone. What would happen if one of them was to fail? Would you be out of business? You have to look at all new market places and figure out which ones you can adapt to your business." Another way to diversify your presence to customers and keep providing updated and fresh content is by producing a weekly e-mail newsletter.

You might ask, how do you make your parts sound exciting? Tole admits that there really "aren't any ways to make OEM parts exciting," but they have devised various other ways to attract potential customers. For example, they try asking their followers questions about their cars or about their opinions on hot news topics. They post funny pictures and videos to get people's attention. They have found that videos of cars being crushed and other parts of the auto recycling operation are interesting to people and attract many viewers.

"I guess the point is to not flood people with ads about an alternator sale," said Tole. "It's important to engage and interact with your customers so that when they do need something your name will be on their mind. Make social feeds valuable to them so they keep reading and don't ignore you."

So, for yards wanting to really start using technology in a more effective way, where's the best place to start?

"The good news is that these things can be accomplished by any size salvage yard provided they use technology to simplify it," said Eitvydas. "I would encourage you to embrace it and don't run from it. Start to work it into your staff's daily processes. For most yards, starting on eBay and growing from there will be the most feasible path."

According to Eitvydas, it is vital to get everyone in the business – from the employee taking inventory to customer service staff to the employee working in the yard – to take ownership of your e-commerce business or it will not work.

"There are several important parts to making your e-commerce business successful," says Eitvydas. "First, it's important that every employee owns it and sees the value of your e-commerce business. We accomplish this by keeping the lines of communication open and showing our employees the benefits and results of using e-commerce."

"Another important part of e-commerce is setting customer expectations and delivering on what is promised. Be transparent, offer a good warranty and make it easy for customers to send parts back. Make sure that every customer is happy no matter what it takes. The last thing you want is bad feedback, bad reviews, or negative talk about your business on social media outlets. Those are things that can negatively affect your internet presence."

Eitvydas feels that as social media goes, the number one place to start is on Facebook because it's free, it's easy and your customers are probably already using it.

"I would encourage auto recyclers to create a fan page for your business and keep it updated," he said. "It takes no time to post a status update and by posting things like questions for your followers, a funny image, news, or even a coupon, you will prompt people to interact with you on a more personal level. This shows that your business has a personality. Social media is a great path for growth in the future. Will your business go

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under for not doing it? No, but it's free, easy, and puts you in front of customers every day so why wouldn't you use it?"

You may say to yourself, this all sounds good but I still have no idea how to navigate my way around all this technology.

Tole offers the following advice: "The only way to learn technology is to start using it," said Tole. "I would suggest starting slowly and doing things one by one. Don't try to take on the whole world all at once. It's ok to make mistakes and ask others for guidance. Many sites and off the shelf software offer help sections and how-to write ups. eBay, for example, makes it easy for a complete Internet novice to list items, yet still offers tools for advanced users. This allows you to start small, learn the system and then step into more advanced selling when you are ready.

"It can take as much time as the yard wants it to. It really depends on how far they want to go and how fast they pick it up. There are too many variables to say it will take 'x' amount of time every day. At the end of the day, the sales and customer satisfaction will reflect the time that is put into it."

Tips To Getting The Most Out Of Your Technology

- If you aren't tech savvy, start slowly using technology. Don't be afraid to ask advice and make mistakes.
- Make a conscious effort to use technology in your daily processes such as with inventory, ordering, videos of your inventory etc.
- Build your eBay business.
- Start to diversify your presence on social media sites, Amazon, Craigslist, etc. The best place to start is with Facebook. Create a fan page for your business and post something that would interest your viewers daily.
- Give your business personality through your posts that encourage personal interaction with your customers. Examples of this include, images, questions to your followers, videos of interesting aspects of your business.
- Jim Eitvydas recommends checking out the following links: Internet Retailers Conference, www.irce.internetretailers.com and Channel Advisor conference, www.channeladvisor.com.

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Compliance Burden

By Kelley Stoklosa

The scrap recycling industry continues to bear most of the weight of scrap theft compliance.

Few demographics know how troublesome and far reaching metals theft is better than recyclers. Scrap yard managers know perhaps better than anyone that a couple hundred dollars worth of copper wire stripped from a building drains time, resources and money for far more people than just the victim of the theft. Thus, few would be surprised by the findings of a recent study by the U.S. Department of Energy, which shows the total value of damages to industries affected by the theft of copper wire would likely exceed more than \$900 million each year. While scrap theft is not new, nor does the problem appear to be slowing down, the ways in which recyclers comply with state and local regulations pertaining to it are changing and gaining traction.

Welcomed Additions

With a lack of federal legislation for scrap theft, the burden falls on states and the recycling industry to ensure scrap sales are legal.

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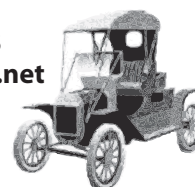
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James West Manager/Sales



Forty-eight states have some form of scrap theft legislation, with North Dakota and Alaska remaining as the last two states without scrap-specific laws. As recently as 2009, five states had yet to adopt these types of laws.

Also of note, Ohio, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and Alabama have passed additional laws in the past year. North Carolina recently enacted a requirement that scrap dealers must collect digital photographs or video of customers standing with the material they intend to sell. Effective Jan. 1, 2013, all scrap metal and bulk merchandise container dealers in Ohio must be registered with the Ohio Department of Safety and report all transactions through the newly created electronic reporting system. More information about Ohio's new electronic reporting and registration system may be found at homelandsecurity.ohio.gov/scrap_metal.stm.

Sellers of scrap metal in Alabama now must be photographed, provide an identification card and information about their vehicles. In Florida, the electronic registration applies to most businesses that sell secondhand goods, for example jewelry or household goods.

Scrap metal dealers in some states, such as Florida and Ohio, have

expressed concern about how certain laws will or do affect their businesses. A scrap dealer in Florida says the new requirement that sellers must bring scrap in a vehicle may deter long-time customers who do not have access to cars. At a recent training session on Ohio Senate Bill 193, which amends and enacts various sections of the Ohio Revised Code to make changes to the 2008 law governing scrap metal dealers and bulk merchandise dealers in the state, hosted by the Ohio Department of Public safety, scrap dealers also voiced concern and confusion about parts of the laws. When put into practice, some wondered if portions of the law made sense, such as having to turn away customers with criminal records from 20 years ago or some customers who are having a difficult time proving ownership.

Bob Schlicher from Ohio Homeland Security stressed how important it is to work with local law enforcement in these situations, adding that there often is a solution.

Rapid Communication

Also at the Ohio training session, Schlicher and other speakers repeatedly said the new law is designed to put those dealers who choose not to comply out of business. The best action scrap dealers could take, Schlicher said, was to report other dealers who were not following the law. Rapid communication, he added, has repeatedly proven to be the most effective way to slow crime.

ScrapTheftAlert.com is the vehicle scrap dealers are using to do just that. According to the website, developed by the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries Inc. (ISRI), Washington, D.C., it is a tool for law enforcement that allows scrap dealers to report stolen material. Reports are then emailed to all subscribers within 100 miles of where the incident took place.

Schlicher recalled a recent instance where wire from a telecommunications tower went missing. A local scrap dealer reported that the missing material was believed to have shown up at the yard's gate. The dealer gave the information to law enforcement and posted it to ISRI's website. As a result, Schlicher said, the material was quickly located by police.

ISRI officials say they are working to make the website more available to the industry. For example, Ohio scrap dealers who register with the department of security will be registered for ScrapTheftAlert.com. The organization also maintains a list of best practices on its main website, www.ISRI.org, and routinely lobbies Congress on behalf of the scrap recycling industry.

Billy Johnson, ISRI director of political and public affairs, says,



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"We must constantly remind policymakers about how much the scrap recycling industry does for the local, state, national and international economies as well as how it protects the environment, conserves natural resources, creates jobs and generates tax revenue. If you aren't out there speaking for yourself, someone else will speak for you—and not necessarily with your best interests in mind." As of yet, no federal legislation has been passed regulating scrap metals theft, though bills have been introduced in Congress.

National Attention

The most recent bill has some industry insiders wondering how it could affect them. Recently, U.S. Sens. Charles E. Schumer from New York, Amy Klobuchar from Minnesota and Lindsey Graham from South Carolina announced legislation designed to make metals theft a federal offense and to make it more difficult to sell.

When announcing the bill, Schumer said, "It is time to put thieves who steal scrap metal from Long Island schools, streets and even gravesites behind ironclad bars. This practical plan will combat this rash of metal theft by requiring recyclers to keep detailed documentation of metal purchases, capping the amount of cash recyclers can pay for scrap metal, ensuring that those selling metal are authorized to do so and by making metal theft a federal crime."

The Metal Theft Prevention Act, as the bill is called, incorporates many of the measures individual states adopt when implementing scrap theft laws. The proposed legislation would require recyclers to collect documentation from individuals interested in selling metal that shows ownership of the metal or that the person is authorized to sell it.

The proposed legislation also would "create a specific federal crime of stealing metal from critical infrastructure" and allow the U.S. Attorney General and state attorneys general to enforce the law.

Critics of the bill, including ISRI, have called it redundant and confusing. ISRI also has released a statement describing the legislation draconian and focused on recyclers rather than the actual criminals.

Congress could vote on the Metals Theft Prevention Act sometime in 2013.

As the states that have enacted legislation iron out related problems and logistics, only time will tell how such laws affect materials theft.

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