

JANUARY



COVER STORY:

The Year Ahead – 2020 DISTRIBUTION

PREVIEW – Aftermarket leaders discuss the major issues, trends and opportunities that they're anticipating for the year ahead.

Regular Departments:

News – A deeper dive into recent changes taking place in the aftermarket

People – A monthly roundup of the promotions, new appointments and milestones for this industry's best asset

Quarterly Research – Babcox Media's Market Research Manager, Bruce Kratoofil, offers expert analysis of current data shifts and developments

Logistics & Technology – Original content focused on industry trends and innovations

Management & HR

Editor Columns & Guest Commentaries

Back Page Feature – The Icebreaker –

In this fun, lightning-round interview, we find out what makes some of today's top aftermarket leaders tick.

FEBRUARY



COVER STORY:

Executive Profile

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MARCH



COVER STORY:

Women at the Wheel – Profiles of female executives, engineers, managers, shop owners, parts pros and other distribution leaders who are making a difference in the automotive aftermarket, from the boardroom to the breakroom.

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COUNTERMAN

TECH TOPICS

Engine Oil – With more vehicles using direct-injection engines and turbochargers, choosing the right oil isn't as easy as it once was.

Spark Plugs – These little engine parts play a herculean role in the internal combustion system, but they shouldn't be taken for granted.

Suspension Components – Overview of the types of mechanical attachment methods for suspension-component fasteners, and related sales opportunities.

TPMS – Overview of how the tire-pressure monitoring system works, and what your customers should know about TPMS and proper tire inflation.

COUNTER VIEW

Climbing the Ladder – Do you have what it takes to be a manager? Tips for making the transition.

Outside the Catalog – Supplemental sources of information for Ford parts.

PRODUCT SHOWCASE:

Oil Additives

COUNTERMAN

TECH TOPICS

Belts 101 – A refresher course on the types of engine belts and their functions.

Brakes – Making the case for caliper rebuild kits.

Mufflers – What do DIY customers need to install a new muffler?

Thermal Management – How pumps, thermostats and sensors work together to maintain the proper engine temperature.

COUNTER VIEW

New vs. Reman – What is remanufacturing, and when does it make sense to recommend reman parts?

Selling Shocks and Struts – For much of the country, winter is pothole season – a prime opportunity for selling suspension parts.

PRODUCT SHOWCASE:

Scan Tools

COUNTERMAN

NATIONAL CAR CARE MONTH

Potential topics: Brake friction, fuel pumps, gaskets, starters/alternators, wheel bearings, O2 sensors, spark plugs, shocks/struts, A/C compressors, performance exhaust, brake rotors, antifreeze, belts & hoses, chemicals, filters, batteries, TPMS, water pumps, wipers and more.

COUNTER VIEW

Stop/Start – An introduction to the function and benefits of stop/start systems, and how vehicles with stop/start technology are different.

Tools – Overview of the basic tools in a technician's toolbox; implementing a loaner-tool program.

PRODUCT SHOWCASE:

Ride Control

Ad Closing: January 2
Ad Materials Due: January 8

Ad Closing: January 28
Ad Materials Due: February 4

Ad Closing: February 26
Ad Materials Due: March 4

APRIL

MAY

JUNE



COVER STORY:

National Car Care Month – Focus on the Independent Aftermarket's Battle For Access To Repair Data

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COVER STORY:

2030 Club

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+ Midyear Distribution Update Featuring the Program Groups

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COUNTERMAN

TECH TOPICS

Bearings – Making the case for OE-quality bearings and wheel-hub assemblies.

Diagnostics – As advanced driver-assistance systems (ADAS) become standard on more vehicles, precise ADAS calibration is becoming a necessity for even the most mundane repairs.

Transmission – Understanding continuously variable transmissions (CVTs) and how they differ from automatics.

Windshield Wipers – Most OEMs and wiper manufacturers recommend wiper-blade replacement every six to 12 months. Why it's such a critical – and often-overlooked – maintenance item.

COUNTER VIEW

Diesel – Overview of the differences between diesel and gasoline engines, and common parts needs for diesel vehicles.

Lights, Camera, Action – A rundown of some of our all-time favorite automotive-themed movies and TV shows.

PRODUCT SHOWCASE:

Brake Friction

COUNTERMAN

COUNTER PRO SALES GUIDE FOR SELLING PARTS

TECH TOPICS

Brakes – Are your customer's brakes trying to tell them something? Warning signs of brakes that need to be inspected or replaced.

Drivetrain – Why it's better to replace the entire CV axle and not just the CV boot.

EcoBoost – Getting to know Ford's EcoBoost technology and similar systems from other OEMs.

Water Pumps – Symptoms and causes of water-pump failure; replacement considerations and related sales opportunities.

COUNTER VIEW

Certified Pros – The value of ASE certification for counter pros, and why it's important to maintain it.

Down on the Farm – Many parts stores in rural areas sell agricultural products. Overview of common ag parts and equipment.

PRODUCT SHOWCASE:

Ignition Parts

COUNTERMAN

TECH TOPICS

Air Filters – When it comes to selecting a high-quality air filter, the media matters.

Bearings – The lubricant inside modern wheel bearings might be the most advanced and researched component inside the entire assembly.

Climate Control – Looking at the various parts that work together to keep motorists comfortable.

Ignition – Exploring the causes of engine misfires, and why replacing the ignition coil isn't always the answer.

COUNTER VIEW

Emissions – Replacing a catalytic converter isn't the same as replacing a muffler or pipe. Overview of the differences between replacement requirements in CARB-compliant states vs. non-CARB states.

Road Trippin' – Educating your customers on the essential elements of a pre-trip maintenance checklist.

PRODUCT SHOWCASE:

Motor Oil

Ad Closing: March 27
Ad Materials Due: April 3

Ad Closing: April 29
Ad Materials Due: May 6

Ad Closing: June 1
Ad Materials Due: June 8

JULY



COVER STORY:

Gold & Platinum Anniversary Issue – Celebrating the Companies That Have Flourished in the Aftermarket for 50 and 100 Years

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AUGUST



COVER STORY:

All in the Family – The Dynamics of Family-Owned Businesses

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SEPTEMBER



COVER STORY:

AMN's Faces of the Future

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COUNTERMAN

TECH TOPICS

Belts and Hoses – What to look for when inspecting belts and hoses – and knowing when it's time to replace.

Brake Pads – A look at how brake pads are made, and why the manufacturing process and types of steel used should matter to your customers.

Spark Plugs – Looking at the different aspects of spark plug design, including when to use anti-seize and the purpose of the insulator.

Thermal Management – Understanding how map-controlled thermostats work.

COUNTER VIEW

Carburetors – Gone but not forgotten, carburetors are alive and well in classic and performance vehicles. Tips for helping customers get their carbureted engines back to peak performance.

Diagnostics – Code readers and scanners for DIYers.

PRODUCT SHOWCASE:

Gaskets & Seals

COUNTERMAN

TECH TOPICS

Cabin Air Filters – Looking at antimicrobial technology and other advancements in cabin air filters.

Detailing – Products and accessories your DIY customers would need to pull off a pro-caliber detailing job on their vehicle.

Fuel Pumps – How fuel pumps have changed, and why it's important to replace the entire module if the pump is failing.

Ride Control – Breaking down the function of the parts and components that work together to provide a comfortable ride, such as ball joints, control arms, strut mounts and sway-bar links.

COUNTER VIEW

Trailer Parts – Common trailer parts and towing issues for customers trying to squeeze in that last-minute camping, boating or fishing trip.

Transmission – Understanding gear ratios and how they affect acceleration and fuel economy.

PRODUCT SHOWCASE:

Bearings

COUNTERMAN

P.A.R.T.S. SURVEY

TECH TOPICS

Brake Hardware – The importance of recommending brake hardware with every brake job.

Gaskets – We take a look at multi-layer steel (MLS) head gaskets and how the different layers seal the engine block and head.

Thermostats – Parts and tools needed for a DIY thermostat replacement, and a few installation tips.

Timing Chains – Why timing-chain-driven water pumps always should be replaced at the same time as the timing chain; making the case for timing-chain water-pump kits.

COUNTER VIEW

Consumer Education – A light-hearted look at the most common myths and misconceptions heard from DIY customers about vehicles and parts.

Turbochargers – What your customers should know about turbochargers and their impact on vehicle maintenance.

PRODUCT SHOWCASE:

Emissions Parts

Ad Closing: June 29
Ad Materials Due: July 6

Ad Closing: July 20
Ad Materials Due: July 27

Ad Closing: August 25
Ad Materials Due: September 1

OCTOBER

**COVER STORY:**

Tips From The Corner Office – Top Supplier Execs Share The Best Leadership Advice They've Ever Gotten

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NOVEMBER

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Startup Standouts – The Leading Innovators Launching New Products in the Aftermarket Today

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DECEMBER

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2020 Counter Professional of the Year

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COUNTERMAN**ASE P2 TEST PREP GUIDE**

Potential Topics: Automatic transmission, brake system, cooling system, drivetrain, electrical system, emission system, engine parts, gaskets, exhaust system, fuel system and more.

COUNTER VIEW

ADAS – A peek at some of the latest and greatest features enabled by advanced driver-assistance systems.

Diagnostics – Reviewing the four categories of diagnostic trouble codes (DTCs); understanding common DTCs.

PRODUCT SHOWCASE:

Filters

COUNTERMAN**TECH TOPICS**

Engine Blocks – Why they fail, symptoms of failure, and repair/replacement options.

Fluids – Overview of a vehicle's fluids and their functions; educating customers on the proper way to check fluid levels.

Lighting – Lighting service is one of the most underperformed aspects of vehicle maintenance – and one of the easiest ways to improve driver safety.

Rotating Electric – Understanding the functions of starters; tips for diagnosing starter problems.

COUNTER VIEW

MAP and MAF Sensors – Understanding the roles of manifold absolute pressure (MAP) sensors and mass airflow (MAF) sensors, and the signs that a sensor is failing.

Outside the Catalog – Supplement sources of information for Chrysler parts.

PRODUCT SHOWCASE:

Timing Kits

COUNTERMAN**TECH TOPICS**

Additives – A look at fuel and oil additives commonly used to help vehicles run better during winter weather.

Batteries – Reviewing fundamental replacement considerations such as cold-cranking amps and reserve capacity.

Decoupler Pulleys – When selling alternators, make sure to ask the shop if the alternator has a decoupler pulley.

Oxygen Sensors – Understanding the oxygen sensor's role in the emission system, the impact of a failed sensor and replacement considerations.

COUNTER VIEW

Heavy-Duty – Snowplows need love – and parts – too. Common parts for heavy-duty trucks, including specialty lighting.

By the Numbers – Customers might not realize that finding the right parts and components often involves measuring fittings and fasteners, matching threads and identifying hose and tubing sizes.

PRODUCT SHOWCASE:

Sensors

Ad Closing: October 1
Ad Materials Due: October 8

Ad Closing: October 26
Ad Materials Due: November 2

Ad Closing: November 20
Ad Materials Due: November 27