

SPRING 2017

CalRVDA

CALIFORNIA RECREATION VEHICLE DEALERS ASSOCIATION



05
06
08
12

CALRVDA Conference 2017

Credit Bureau Connection Expands

RV Industry Resurgence

5 Ways RV Dealerships are
Using Instagram Stories

CONTENTS



14

Senate Bill 1

16

Become a Member Today

18

How Busy is Sacramento?





STEVE RICHARDSON | PRESIDENT

With Founder and CalRVDA President Emeritus Ernie Friesen

I am an optimist by nature and even during difficult times, such as an economic downturn, I look for options that will encourage a vibrant RV market in California. The truth is that this state represents the eighth-largest economy in the world and, in spite of the historic population growth of the past three decades, the natural beauty of our home state is unmatched anywhere in the world.

The challenges are never easy when you do business in a state that is as geographically, demographically, politically and economically diverse as ours. However, I do believe that a vibrant CalRVDA is a positive and important step. I urge everyone to get involved.

The California Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association (CalRVDA) represents RV dealerships throughout the Golden State. Dedicated to the RVing experience, these entrepreneurial member companies strive to provide the utmost customer service and employee satisfaction.

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CALIFORNIA RECREATION VEHICLE DEALERS ASSOCIATION

CALRVDA CONFERENCE 2017

CalRVDA's conference is quickly becoming the event where leaders in the industry can discuss trends, enhance business practices, get the insights of experts and share what works on a day-to-day basis. The idea is to increase the capacity of the individual member in aggressively pursuing a successful business future.

During this year's conference the topics were wide-ranging. However, the research provided was significant and was indepth on the modern issues confronting RV dealers in the marketplace.

We heard what to expect and how to handle lemon law cases. We were provided legislative insights into labor issues and how they directly impact us as employers. We had a meaningful members' roundtable on how to expedite business practices in a way that increases efficiency but does not compromise dealer profits.

The industry is only as strong as the membership. We look forward to seeing you and your colleagues next year.

Owner's Roundtable



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CREDIT BUREAU CONNECTION EXPANDS

Soft Pull Credit Report Offerings by Adding TransUnion's Prequalification and Inquiries

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www.prweb.com/releases/Credit-Bureau-Connection/TransUnion/prweb13593407.htm

Fresno, CA (PRWEB) August 04, 2016

ANDS

Instant Prescreen Products

AND DEALER NEEDS

THE AUTOMOTIVE

FINANCE PROCESS.”

Consumer and dealer needs are changing the automotive finance process, and soft pull credit reports bring many advantages to both consumers and dealers. More consumers than ever are financing their vehicle purchases, benefiting from lower interest rates and longer terms to finance. Also, consumers today are more aware of their credit situation and the impact of traditional hard pull credit reports on their credit score.

Credit Prequalification meets a market need creating a competitive advantage along with an improved consumer experience. CBC and TransUnion's Credit Prequalification offers easy integration, proper disclosures and no impact on the consumer's credit score. A Prequalification Report can be obtained without the need for the consumer's SSN or DOB. Consumers are more likely to provide their basic information when only a minimal amount is requested and when a soft inquiry is pulled prior to starting a full credit application. This allows dealers to offer real-time finance options to prequalified applicants based on their actual credit score. This is a consumer consent-based solution, is fully FCRA compliant and does not require a firm offer of credit to be provided.

Instant Prescreen is a powerful soft pull solution that can be utilized at the point of sale, in the service drive, as part of an equity mining solution and other applicable situations. Different from Prequalification, Instant Prescreen is not initiated by the consumer, but by the dealership, when a consumer may potentially be in the market for financing. Similar to Prequalification, an Instant Prescreen can be performed without an SSN or DOB and does not impact a consumer's credit score, but a firm offer of credit must be provided to the consumer if they meet the dealership's lending criteria.

Credit Bureau Connection (CBC), the industry leader of credit report and compliance solutions, recently announced the addition of TransUnion's Prequalification and Instant Prescreen soft pull credit products to its product suite. CBC provides a complete web-based front-end credit screening system tailored for franchise and independent dealers, as well as integration with many of the industry's leading software solutions. CBC provides a full array of credit report and compliance solutions.



RV INDUSTRY

Economics and demographics are

BY LAUREN CAGGIANO

POSTED ON AUGUST 3, 2016

BY NWIBQ.COM

RESURGENCE

e aligning to propel the industry.

The recreational vehicle (RV) industry is robust and poised for a bright future, according to several industry stakeholders in Elkhart County and beyond.

RV dealer sales are one way to track the RV market. Pam Argostino is the general manager/president of Camp-Land RV, a large family-owned RV dealership serving the Northwest Indiana-Chicago area for 50 years. Her dealership has experienced an uptick in sales with the improved economy.

From 2010 to 2014, the dealership was inching its way back, with sales increasing each year. In 2015, the dealership surpassed pre-recession numbers, with sales up almost 15 percent over the previous year.

Argostino's experience is not unique. It represents the industry's state of affairs as a whole. RV sales had plunged 65 percent by 2009. With gas prices hovering at about \$4 a gallon, many consumers abandoned dreams of RV ownership or simply left theirs in the driveway instead of paying steep fuel prices. Fast-forward seven years and the trend has been reversed. The average price per gallon is around \$2, the economy is on stronger ground and consumer spending is strong.

Argostino says the dealership is poised for more growth this year. "We are budgeting for another 15 percent increase in number of sales over last year," she says. "So far this year, we are very close to hitting those numbers and expect that we will."

Why is Argostino so optimistic? A lifestyle driven by more economic certainty is a factor. "I think people are more optimistic about the economy," she says. "Maybe not in the obvious way you would think—I think it's just not at the forefront of their minds anymore and they're returning to living their lives and not operating out of fear or 'survival' mode anymore."

Argostino says, "... getting outdoors, seeing things you can only see in a state park, sitting by the campfire, hiking, truly seeing America, I think, makes us value a simpler time—no phones, no computers, etc.

"I think [camping] makes families closer through their shared experiences and sometimes the mishaps you have while camping or with your camper are the funniest memories you have later. You also have the flexibility to move around to different areas without all the hassle of standing in lines at airports."

That mindset has implications for the industry as a whole—across the supply chain at large. Argostino says her dealership employs about 35 people and they are always in search of qualified talent. "Because of the upswing in purchases, that also translates to higher volume in service work and repairs. We are always looking to train and hire service technicians. We'd hire five more technicians today if we could find the right individuals. We cannot keep up with demand for service work in the summer months and we're always trying to hire and correct this problem."

It's a mixed bag for manufacturers, too, as Argostino explained. They are producing more RVs than ever, which need to be transported and delivered locally and across the country. To that end, she says the RV industry is always looking for transportation drivers.

And more RVs can translate into a boon to local tourism. "The more RVs that are out there, the more the parks are full," she says. "It brings a lot of tourism to this part of the state." She adds that the multimillion-dollar sports complex being built in Portage will also have a lake and a large campground.

Mark Dobson, CEO of the Elkhart County Economic Development Corp., has similar comments. He notes that although significant, the footprint of the RV industry is difficult to quantify because it's so far-reaching.

"The overall impact of the resurgence of the RV industry is hard to measure, but vitally important to the region," he says. "This region is known for building things. Elkhart County is the RV capital of the world. Eighty percent of the units produced in the U.S. are produced by Elkhart County manufacturers." This work extends beyond skilled labor. There is a need for the best and brightest in white collar jobs, too. In Dobson's words, "Not only are the units built here, this is where research and development takes place. The innovations seen in the industry are developed here."

Continued on page 10



Dobson says that, although there are many factors at play, innovation has been key in the industry's resurgence.

The companies impacted by the 2008 downturn took "extraordinary steps to reinvent themselves," he says. For example, they implemented traditional best practices to improve bottom lines. They relied on their entrepreneurial spirit to press forward, despite hurdles.

Dobson points out that any company is only as good as its people and Elkhart County has traditionally been blessed with a vibrant workforce. Another variable is the consolidation of supply chain companies.

"The supply chain is stronger and more diversified in Elkhart County than prior to the recession," Dobson says. "The aging baby boomer population is helping. More and more baby boomers are retiring and are looking to have an RV as part of their lifestyle. And companies are making units more affordable than ever."

"PEOPLE WITH KNOW-HOW" Bill Fenech, Ron Fenech and Don Clark founded Middlebury-based Grand Design RV in 2011, citing a high level of confidence in the industry, the local economy and the skills of the local workforce.

In other words, it really is a perfect storm. "When Elkhart County is booming [like now], the region is benefitting by the high levels of employment and company investment," Dobson says.

Statistics from the Indiana Department of Workforce Development show Elkhart County has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the state at 4.2 percent. With a better economy than in recent years and a high demand for product, local RV manufacturers are relishing the business climate.

Elkhart-based Thor Industries Inc. signaled confidence in the continued growth of the RV industry in July when it acquired Jayco, based in Middlebury. Jayco operates the subsidiaries Starcraft RV, Highland Ridge and Entegra Coach. The merger makes Thor Industries the world's largest RV manufacturer. Together, the two companies employ 7,500 workers in Elkhart County.

“

**EVERY TIME OUR
INDUSTRY TAKES A
DIP, IT COMES BACK
AT A NEW HIGH.**

”

Thor Industries will continue to operate Jayco as an independent company under its current leadership team. Derald Bontrager is president and CEO of Jayco, a company founded by his father, Lloyd, in 1968. Lloyd Bontrager developed the basic design that is patented and still in use.

Derald Bontrager says, “As a company and as a family-owned group, we’ve been through some good and bad times. Great people and products are what have kept us afloat.”

He’s optimistic about the future of the industry because of a healthier economy, more access to credit and a changing demographic. According to Bontrager, the average age of an RV buyer has gone down, which means younger families represent a newer yet viable market. He projects the next decade or two will be “very strong” for the industry.

Like Dobson, Bontrager says innovation will be what propels the RV industry forward. Manufacturers have become “more aggressive” with product development. For example, he says products are lighter and can be more easily towed by smaller vehicles.

Don Clark, co-owner of Grand Design RV in Middlebury, has seen his share of changing sales cycles as a 30-year industry veteran. A former Keystone RV Co. executive, he founded the company in 2011 with brothers Bill and Ron Fenech. According to Clark, it was a matter of timing. “We had a tremendous level of confidence in the industry, the local economy and people with know-how.”

Clark’s far-sightedness came into play as well. “Every time our industry takes a dip, it comes back at a new high,” he says. Today the industry is reporting record sales highs and Grand Design is no exception. This year, executives are confident they can surpass the 67 percent jump in retail sales from 2014 to 2015.

With such growth often comes a need for additional space. The company has outgrown its existing four-building manufacturing complex, which collectively has about 500,000-square-feet of space. In May, Indiana Gov. Mike Pence and Lt. Gov. Eric Holcomb were on hand for a groundbreaking ceremony for an \$11 million expansion project that includes construction of two 110,000-square-foot buildings on a 48-acre parcel purchased last year. The new building is likely to be finished by August.

The company employs about 800 employees and plans to hire around 100 once the expansion is complete. More space means more production to keep pace with increasing demand for the company’s four brands of upscale rigs: the Solitude, Momentum, Reflection and Imagine.

“In Elkhart County, we have an amazing workforce to draw from, and we’ve been fortunate to tap into the best of the best,” Ron Fenech said in a statement. “It sounds like platitude, but it’s really not. Our workers are phenomenal.”

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UTILIZING SOCIAL MEDIA



By Stephen Rodriguez
Marketplace Communications

We live in a world of interactivity and interconnectivity. Ongoing conversations and relationships are being continually interwoven together through dialogues and narratives. Technology has been the epicenter for such growth and change. Social media has paved the way for an unparalleled advancement in communication and interaction. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and a wide variety of other social media mediums have been the driving force for voices to be heard and growth in business to occur. The question is this: Are you utilizing social media to its fullest potential?



MARKETPLACE
COMMUNICATIONS

STATS

1. Over 2.8 billion people use social media.
2. 48 percent of Americans have interacted with companies or institutions on at least one social media network.
3. 41 percent of Americans say it's important that the institutions they engage with have a strong social media presence.
4. Of those Americans who have a social media account, 28 percent would rather engage with a brand/organization on social media than visit a physical location.
5. 59 percent of Americans who have a social media account agree that customer service via social media has made it easier to get questions and concerns resolved.
6. Nearly one-third of Facebook users (32 percent) engage with brands regularly.
7. More than two million advertisers regularly use Facebook to market their business.
8. Twitter users are three times as likely as Facebook users to follow a brand, with 49 percent of monthly Twitter users following brands or companies.
9. About 68 percent of Instagram users engage with brands regularly.
10. Instagram users are 2.5 times more likely to click on ads than users on other social media platforms.
11. Ad recall from a sponsored post on Instagram is 2.8 times higher than Nielsen's norms for online advertising.
12. Two-thirds of all Pins on Pinterest are from a business' website.
13. People who saw promoted Pins on Pinterest had a 40 percent greater awareness of new products and a 50 percent higher purchase intent than Pinners who haven't.

TIPS

Making sure to take advantage of social media across all platforms is almost becoming a necessary requirement for growth in business and brand recognition. As social media continues to evolve and become a mainstay in the lives of individuals, it is imperative to find ways to continually tap into this reservoir. Here are some tips that can help you do this:

1. **Continually Provide Content:** Making sure to keep your brand at the forefront of the public eye, on a continual basis, is important.
2. **Hashtag Repertoire:** Using hashtags strategically is another way to better use social media. Hashtags are what people use to tag a post, article, etc., so that it can become the talk of the town. Watch for trending hashtags to see if you can relate your post to them.
3. **Be a Resource:** Not only is social media used for promotional aspects, but is should also be a resource for education, entertainment and inspiration.
4. **Continue the Conversation:** Being able to converse in the web of social media means that you are engaging with, following, liking and investing in other people, brands and companies. Social media is an ongoing conversation that revolves around and around.
5. **Engage with the Voices:** Be proactive in talking, engaging with and listening to people who are asking questions and commenting on your dealership. Responding is key.

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BY
TERRY McHALE

SBI

The Governor and the democratically controlled Legislature worked together to sign into law a tax increase that will ultimately result in \$52 billion to cover the transportation needs in California for the next decade. It has been touted as the single greatest tax increase in the history of the state.

The greatest source of the money will come from a 12-cent per gallon increase in the gasoline tax. There will also be a revisiting of the controversial vehicle tax, the same tax that resulted in such anger from constituents that it was numbered as one of the reasons for the recall of Gray Davis. The fee will be based on the value of the vehicle. We will also see increases on diesel fuel and zero emission vehicles.

SENATE BILL ONE

The idea behind the legislation is that our roads are a mess. The embarrassment of driving any of our major freeways has gone from the inability to have a pleasant drive, to seeing actual damage being caused to our vehicles. The money will be used in excess of five billion a year to put our paved roads in good condition and to assure that our public transit is enhanced. In spite of the fact that we now have more than 40 million people in our state, there is talk of trying to reduce traffic congestion.

Most of the new taxes will go to state and local programs. The Governor says that by the end of the next decade we will have touched, in a positive way, almost 98% of the roads in California.

One of the few good elements of the legislation is that parks and recreation will benefit to the tune of more than \$80 million a year. The money will be used specifically for recreational purposes and will be placed into a fund for the off-highway division, boating and waterways, beaches and other active services to draw upon.

At least one legislator is facing a recall for his vote on SB 1. In fact, that specific recall could actually upset the supermajority balance of the Legislature.



WHERE IS IT ALL GOING

Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Program – \$3.24 billion a year on average. Off the top, the program allocates several hundred million dollars to various endeavors:

- \$400 million to maintain and repair state bridges and culverts
- \$200 million for Sacramento and 23 other counties with local transportation taxes
- \$100 million to increase the number of trips by bike and on foot
- \$25 million for the freeway service patrol program
- \$25 million for sustainable communities planning grants to local governments
- \$7 million total for transportation-related research and education at UC (\$5 million) and CSU (\$2 million)
- \$5 million in workforce development grants to local agencies

Of the roughly \$2.48 billion remaining, half would go to Caltrans for state highway maintenance and rehabilitation. The other half would go to cities and counties for road maintenance and repair projects and railroad grade separations. It also pays for an emphasis on “complete streets” that are safer for walkers and bikers, capture stormwater and include other features.



BY JIM MILLER | SacBee
APRIL 28, 2017 1:11 PM





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Becoming a member gives you many different benefits that you can come to love and enjoy. Make sure to sign up.

CalRVDA educates government officials about issues of concern to the RV industry
CalRVDA testifies in legislative committees and lobbies state legislators and regulators
CalRVDA maintains positive and direct links to chiefs of DMV, CHP, NMB and Caltrans
CalRVDA also directly communicates with RVDA, RVIA and CalARVC.

CalRVDA is the only organization in California representing RV Dealers
CalRVDA protects and defends RV dealers in state legislative affairs
CalRVDA proactively sponsors new legislation that helps RV dealers
CalRVDA aggressively and effectively opposes harmful legislation



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CONFERENCE 2018

Rancho Mirage, CA
February 21st - 22nd

HOW BUSY SACRAN

"EVERY PART OF YOUR LIFE, BUSINESS AND PERSONAL, IS IM

Employment Rules for Part-time Empl

Reinvention of OHV Program

Taxes on Vacation Homes |

Workers' Compensation |

2017

2,495 BILLS INTRODUCED

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IMPACTED BY THE LAWS THAT ARE PASSED OR VETOED."

Employees | New Legal Causes of Action

| Gas Tax and Vehicle Fees

Low-cost Vehicle Insurance

Disability Apportionment

2016

1,993 BILLS INTRODUCED



CalRVDA.org

THE CALIFORNIA RECREATION VEHICLE DEALERS ASSOCIATION (CALRVDA) REPRESENTS RV DEALERSHIPS THROUGHOUT THE GOLDEN STATE. DEDICATED TO THE RVING EXPERIENCE, THESE ENTREPRENEURIAL MEMBER COMPANIES STRIVE TO PROVIDE THE UTMOST CUSTOMER SERVICE AND EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION.

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