**THE CORONAVIRUS STORM IS ONLY THE TIP OF THE COMMERCIAL VEHICLE ICEBERG**



**Next-generation programs integrated with innovative engagement technology, marketed and implemented by the industry’s leading Heavy Duty Marketing Expert.**

**By Gene Ely** [**www.theheavydtuymarketing**](http://www.theheavydtuymarketing)**academy.com**

**The Superficial Tip –** We’re all aware that the Coronavirus Pandemic with its shelter-in-place and quarantine mandate is a historic event that has already catalyzed lifestyle changes not only in the way we live but variations in how businesses are coping to sustain critical transportation needs. And although we will most certainly overcome this disease, what will be the residual effects and long-term modifications in the way all commercial vehicle businesses will conduct future strategies and sales transactions?

Especially in the Heavy Duty Truck, Trailer, Equipment and Commercial Vehicle (CV) industry?

The obvious and immediate disruption is a near-term international recession simply because we live in a global economy and this pandemic is worldwide. The problem, of course, is that a largescale supply-chain infrastructure involves inventories, transportation of products and services across a worldwide network.

But make no mistake, the only bond holding our country together at this point is that trucks are continuing to deliver every necessity of life…while ruck support services play an essential role.

Meanwhile, Washington’s leadership has been the first international government to preemptively respond to the epidemic’s aftermath of economic chaos of this first-ever world event.

In the heavy duty sphere, we’re seeing an escalation of online and E-commerce parts ordering that has already garnered over 25% of aftermarket truck parts purchases. We will see a major spike here.

Field selling has quickly evolved into a combination of phone, E-commerce and other online activities. As mentioned, this trend was well underway prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and was inevitable because we live in an information rich and time poor society. In fact, many have ironically referenced this information explosion as an “Infodemic” of too much data, creating an over-exposure of traditional marketed information at a dizzying rate of new industry products and services.

The results of our new over-communicated society have similarly witnessed an explosion of more truck parts and services products, heightened by more sales pitches by more salespeople to fleet managers who have less and less time for face-to-face interaction.

The fact is that the Coronavirus has hastened the reality of marketing automation and E-commerce transition that now appears to be in full swing. Online parts research will be supplanted by phone and inbound queries for more information, pricing, availability, order placement, and final delivery.

**Below the Surface** **– The CV** **industry will return better than ever post COVID-19 –** Our industry has been historically resilient, not only surviving economic crisis, but leading technical innovations that create safer highways and promote added energy conservation and cleaner environments across the world.

In that regard, the best option to take advantage of the new post-virus business rebound is to catch the marketing automation wave that’s sweeping across the new generational landscape.

Specifically, it’s the sales and marketing paradigm shift to the new GenXers and Millennials, ages 23-54, who now comprise 73% of the North American workforce. These are the key decision makers who influence truck brand selection, along with aftermarket parts and services .The major evolution in commercial vehicle demographics was propelled by the expansion of the Internet’s message saturation that’s often identified as “Noisy,” “Loud,” “Overcrowded,” repetitious style resulting in a “Me Too” presentation type of product, equipment and services messaging.

As a result, the new GenX and Millen marketing reality has changed direction away from the traditional “All about the Company” messaging tenor, typical of the Baby Boom generation’s marketing flair, that no longer resonates with younger commercial vehicle purchasing influencers.

 Instead, in order to cope with the digital era’s overflow of communication, GenX and Millens have adapted by selectively choosing the message presentation style that commands their attention. The result has become the new information standard for **CX Customer Experience messaging that combines the charismatic style of personal selling with digitally engaging communications.**

In essence, traditional and outdated style of commercial vehicle marketing communications was all about the company and is known as “Business-Centric.” Its easily recognized by the direction of the message. Is the message about the company, its core values, superior employees, mission, vision, goals, great customer service and quality products?

To the contrary, contemporary messaging that reverberates throughout the new GenX and Millennials audiences is considered to be “Customer Centric” and well-known among professional Business-to-Business (B2B) and Business-to-Consumer (B2C) marketers and practitioners alike as fostering **CX or Customer Experience.**

Customer-centric presentations are easily recognized by their engaging, attracting, and invitation for valuable, relative two-way CX Customer Experience. Engagement communications are through a variety of content marketing platforms: Interactive websites with videos, blogs, case studies, E-books, infographics, white papers, social media, and white papers to name just a few.

Bolstering the new age CX preference is research showing that 84% of GenX and Millennials expect brands to provide content that entertains and adds value to their lives? And, 70% of them prefer to learn about products through content and interactive websites.

**Gene Ely** [www.theheavydutymarketingacademy.com](http://www.theheavydutymarketingacademy.com)