



2008

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2008 was the busiest, most effective and productive year ever for the Car Care Council (CCC) and its “Be Car Care Aware” (BCCA) consumer education campaign, working on behalf of the automotive aftermarket industry. Record high gas prices and shrinking disposable income drove strong interest from consumers and the media for information on how vehicle maintenance could improve gas mileage and save money overall.

The council, with its reputation as a respected and credible third-party information source on vehicle maintenance and care, was well positioned to aggressively push the aftermarket message and respond to wildly changing economic factors and corresponding consumer behavior trends. Whether extolling the advantages of driving vs. flying on vacations, or detailing the cost benefits of keeping a vehicle rather than buying a new one, or simply how better maintenance saves money at the gas pump, the “Be Car Care Aware” campaign delivered timely and topical tips and information to motorists via a consumer media hungry for content. At the same time, the council – through funding and direction from the Automotive Aftermarket Industry Association (AAIA) – provided the marketing and promotional materials to repair shops and parts stores to educate customers at the point of purchase.

As a result of frequent press releases, letters to the editor, media interviews and Web site visitors, the campaign touched the motoring public hundreds of millions of times. Here’s a sampling of the media publicity generated:

- CCC stories featured nationally on *CBS Early Show*, *Today Show*, *CBS Evening News*, *Fox News*, *CNBC* and *CBS Up-to-the-Minute*.
- More than 200 local television news stories throughout the country.
- More than 180 radio interviews reaching audiences coast-to-coast.
- Letters to the editor focusing on fuel efficiency through vehicle maintenance have appeared in more than 100 newspapers.
- Print stories and interviews appeared in thousands of major dailies, local papers and magazines, including:
 - *Associated Press* • *Convenience Store News* • *Baltimore Examiner* • *Detroit Free Press*
 - *New York Daily News* • *Christian Science Monitor* • *Boston Herald* • *Washington Post*
 - *Chicago Tribune* • *Florida Today* • *SmartMoney* • *AARP*
 - *Houston Chronicle*
- Audience of “Be Car Care Aware” syndicated stories topped 760 million.
- Award-winning radio and print stories entitled *Put the Brakes on Soaring Gas Prices*, *Hot Weather the Cause of Battery Trouble*, *When Your Car Says Wash Me Please* and *Going Green*.
- Web stories appearing in business and financial Web sites, including:
 - *ABCNews.com* • *Investors Business Daily* • *YahooNews* • *Popular Mechanics*
 - *CNN Money* • *MSNBC.com* • *Fidelity* • *Auto Spectator*
 - *Forbes* • *Reuters* • *Car & Driver* • *Auto Channel*
 - Plus, numerous television station sites throughout the country
- Increased coverage of BCCA stories in the blogosphere.

In addition to traditional media outreach techniques, a number of new tactics were introduced in 2008:

- Produced 12 car care video minutes for use on Web site and for repair shops and store use.
- Fuel economy and environmental sections were added to popular Car Care Guides.
- Online version of the Car Care Guide posted on www.carcare.org.
- Redesigned the council’s Web site.
- Partnered with the Alliance to Save Energy to reach more consumers with vehicle maintenance fuel efficiency message.
- Haynes Manuals provided basic DIY content and video for Web site.
- The Car Care Council earned two international MarCom awards for the Car Care Guide and its newly-redesigned Web site.

2009

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

Never has the aftermarket industry's need been greater for consumer education about the benefits of regular vehicle maintenance, care and repair than in 2009. New vehicle sales are plummeting. Thousands of car dealers are closing their doors and bays. Gasoline costs are lower but will go higher. Consumers have less disposable income to spend and are holding on tight to what they do have.

Each of these economic and consumer behavior factors are converging to position the independent aftermarket to capture a greater share of DIFM vehicle service and repair business and DIY parts sales. 2009 is the year to reinforce the benefits of proper vehicle maintenance for better fuel economy, extending vehicle life, protecting the environment, improving safety and showcasing the convenience, affordability, technical expertise and customer service of local independent businesses.

To accomplish this, the council has made it a priority to aggressively engage repair shops and parts stores in the "Be Car Care Aware" campaign as better communicators to their customers with specific emphasis on involvement in Car Care Events. While National Car Care Month in April is a nationwide celebration, the events are all local. A new "community car care" focus will be developed.

In addition to expanding on-going public relations and media outreach reported in the 2008 report, the Car Care Council has created and will implement a number of new and exciting initiatives in 2009. Here's a sampling of what's planned:

- Aggressive outreach to repair shops and parts stores to encourage greater participation in Car Care Months and in the overall "Be Car Care Aware" campaign.
- Create and distribute quarterly "Tool Kits" for repair shops and parts stores with timely/topical/seasonal marketing materials for local customer and media communications and marketing.
- Considering plans for a "Car Care Fair" exhibit at AAPEX in Las Vegas in November. The exhibit would take the campaign to the industry, showcasing Car Care Months and car clinic how-to demos, displays of promotional and marketing materials, and more.
- Enter the world of social networking by creating Car Care Council Facebook to reach more consumers.
- Expand basic DIY content on the Web site.
- Produce more video Car Care Minutes.
- Engage distributors and program groups to help customers and shop members increase traffic using consumer education materials.
- Urge state aftermarket associations to involve member repair shops to get involved in year-round consumer education and community car care events.
- Deliver monthly easy-to-execute "getting involved" tips for the industry.
- Post timely/topical/seasonal weekly consumer car care tips on Web site home page.