



## The Plan to Tell the Aftermarket "Green" Story

### Project

#### **"Driving Toward a Cleaner Environment: The Automotive Aftermarket Green Story"**

### Background

The automotive aftermarket industry does not get credit for its extensive contributions to a cleaner environment. Most of the industry's stakeholders are unaware of its commitment to sustainability and its widespread environmental thinking and practices in the areas of recycling, disposal, packaging, transportation and facilities management.

The very purpose of the aftermarket is to provide the parts, products and services to keep America's vehicles operating properly, efficiently, safely and cleanly. The aftermarket contributes to better gas mileage, less energy consumption and cleaner air.

The aftermarket industry has for decades practiced sustainability and has been "green" long before being "green" was mainstream.

Whether it's performing routine maintenance like replacing dirty air filters and changing spark plugs, a tune-up, wheel alignment, oil change or rebuilding/remanufacturing parts, recycling used oil, batteries, tires, chemicals and fluids, or practicing new energy savings in packaging, transportation or facilities design and management – the aftermarket is a leader in sustainability – meeting the needs of the present without compromising the future.

Because the aftermarket industry has not told its compelling eco-story, it has been painted with the broad brush of the overall vehicle industry that contributes to pollution. Telling the aftermarket's "green" story will proactively address the contention that the industry is relatively unknown, misunderstood and underappreciated.

### Strategic Review

The aftermarket "green" story will present numerous benefits including:

- Help enhance the image of the independent automotive aftermarket.
- Increase awareness of the aftermarket among key audiences including state and federal legislators and government agencies, Wall Street and main street.
- Make aftermarket careers more attractive to socially-conscious job-seekers.
- Dovetail with "Be Car Care Aware" environmental messages.
- Reinforce leadership role of AAIA as voice of the aftermarket.
- Encourage aftermarket businesses to be greener.

### Communications Objective

Tell the automotive aftermarket industry "green" story by educating stakeholders about its practices, processes and products that are energy efficient, recyclable, reusable and non-hazardous. Demonstrate the environmental responsibility/stewardship of the aftermarket through its commitment to having a minimal impact on the health of the ecosystem and a positive impact on society and the planet.

### Tactics

#### **PHASE ONE: RESEARCH**

- Establish task force with AAIA Marketing Committee.
- Create online survey of AAIA member companies.
- Call for contributions via SmartBrief, *Aftermarket Insider*, trade media releases.
- Conduct secondary research.
- Analyze data and anecdotal contributions.

## PHASE TWO: CREATIVE

- Design customizable printed packet using recycled materials.
- Create Nxtbook online home (Greenhouse, Garage) for the story.
- The AAIA Greenhouse will be an electronic publication, created and hosted by Nxtbook Media. Used for *Aftermarket Insider* and the past two *AAIA Digital Factbooks*, the Nxtbook platform allows for advanced optimized publications, with video, audio, hyperlinks and more interactive possibilities. The link to the AAIA Greenhouse Nxtbook will be in a unique, designated landing page on the AAIA Web site, and will look like a magazine, with printable pages for customized printed portfolios, specific to the target audience. Throughout the publications will be links to expanded data, including participating company Web sites and other relevant “green” information. There will also be elements of interactivity, where industry members can submit information on their own green programs instantly, and pages can be added, removed and adjusted as the project continues to grow. We chose this platform because it’s more structured than a Web site, but just as fluid, and pages can be easily printed or shared electronically for the appropriate readers.
- Writing content for printed and online resources.
- Present mock-up to Marketing Committee.
- The mock-up will consist of a custom designed 9X12 portfolio, which will be printed on ecologically responsible, environmentally-friendly paper (100 percent post-consumer), and will include samples of the pages and template designs. The pages are representations of what will be included in the Nxtbook, which can be easily printed and included in the portfolio, and tailored to any audience or recipient.

## PHASE THREE: COMMUNICATIONS

### Internal communications:

- SmartBrief
- *Aftermarket Insider*
- AAIA Web site
- Leadership Days
- Legislative Summit
- AAIA Town Hall
- AAPEX Express show daily
- GAAS

### External communications:

- Media releases
- blogs
- feature articles
- social media
- op eds
- media tour
- press conference
- presentations to groups
- one-on-one Capitol Hill meetings

## Audiences

- State and federal legislators and agency regulators.
- Wall Street analysts.
- Consumers.
- Media: Consumer, trade, business & financial, environmental, bloggers.
- Trade associations.
- School career counselors.
- Aftermarket industry leaders and employees.