

National  
Catalog  
Managers  
Association

# inside Cataloging

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MARK RICHARDSON, AAP

## from the President Notes

Happy New Year. I think we're allowed to say that for most of January. But it reminds me that April 24-27 will be here soon and with it – the 37th annual NCMA Knowledge Exchange. Inside this winter edition of your newsletter, you will find all the information you need to prepare, register and get the most out of your annual conference.

We are very excited to have as keynote speakers John Washbish of the Aftermarket Auto Parts Alliance; Paul Magin of Activant; Bryan Murphy from WHI Solutions; Brad Duncan from OptiCat; and Mexican market expert Evaristo Garcia. The theme of the conference is "Content Without Borders" and our venue is the beautiful Hyatt Regency San Antonio on the Riverwalk. [Click here](#) for the complete conference agenda and the registration forms.

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## 2010 Knowledge Exchange Conference

### Here

are the facts:

The 37th Annual NCMA Knowledge Exchange conference is April 24-27 at the Hyatt Regency Riverwalk in San Antonio, Texas. The cost of registration is \$495 for NCMA members and \$695 for new members. We have a \$198 per night rate and availability guaranteed at the Hyatt through March 26. The golf outing will be hosted by the Hyatt Hill Country course on Saturday, April 24 and the all-inclusive fee is \$175. In 2009, the NCMA conference was one of the most successful industry events – attended by 200 automotive professionals and their vendor partners.



**Here's why vendors should exhibit:** The cost of an 8X10 booth and two representative registrations is \$1,250. The members of NCMA are qualified decision-makers or decision-influencers and they like to do business with people they know. The automotive aftermarket is one of the most successful segments of the economy.

**Here's why you should attend:** NCMA Knowledge Exchange is the only industry conference focused exclusively on the training, networking and professional development needs of automotive catalog and content managers. We have a strong agenda of respected keynote presenters, expert panels and informative technical breakout sessions. Knowledge Exchange is the best three days you can invest in staying current with industry developments and your professional development.

**Here's how easy it is to register:** [Click here](#) – you can print out the forms and fax them back or follow a link to the AAIA meetings page and register online. If you are a returning user, your user name at AAIA will be your e-mail address. The default password is "welcome."

If you have any questions e-mail us at [ncma@aftermarket.org](mailto:ncma@aftermarket.org). □

## Catalog Judging – Feb. 19 Deadline

The NCMA Catalog Excellence Awards are an important way of recognizing the best catalog publications of our industry in print, CD and Web. The deadline for submitting your catalog for consideration and judging is Friday, Feb. 19. Board members and others volunteer their time to select the winners so awards can be made at the conference awards luncheon. You can review the judging criteria and submission forms by opening the Catalog Judging folder on the Web, [click here](#). □

## ACES: A Case Study



Most of us have had the pleasure of migrating from one catalog standard to another, and if you haven't yet, you will! The sunset date for the Legacy Vehicle table follows closely to the end of the Mayan calendar. Coincidence? I think not. And while developing a project of this magnitude may seem like the end of the world, the end result will be well worth it.

As some of us have seen using a conversion process to export Legacy data to produce ACES can be time consuming and not always representative of your source data. So really, what better way is there to create a catalog that truly represents your source data without becoming totally ACES native?

At IMC, the timely adoption of the ACES standard was necessary for creating a more robust database for our in-house point of sale and data entry, and, more importantly to actively become part of the solution. Together with the design team at the Solenium group, we developed an IMC specific solution. We have implemented a Top Down Project Management methodology ensuring that each aspect of the project is well documented with buy-in from all relevant departments and stakeholders.

It wasn't always that way. Initially, fears and doubts were the norm. Why would we fix what isn't broken? ACES? We just finished migrating to AAIA! While warranted, this apprehension had to be met with effective and honest communication. It would be unwise to sugarcoat it. Buy-in from your catalog team is critical. Positive involvement of key personnel from other departments is very important. With these key members providing input and communication, the positive momentum generated becomes infectious and unstoppable. Everyone must be made to understand that this is an investment toward the future.

IMC stocks parts in 2,000 different part types with more than four million application records making this project a massive undertaking. Depending on whether you are a manufacturer or a distributor, you will have varying amounts of data which will dictate the scope of the conversion. The allocation (or reallocation) of resources may be unavoidable.

Data accuracy must be the focus! How do we get our Legacy data to convert properly without too much human intervention? Fortunately, IMC already delivers ACES data for these part types using our SynchroMap tool, and have a decent grasp on our data exceptions. Mapping fitment notes and consolidating various ways to say '2WD' or 'with A/C' is tedious but a necessary step for creating and maintaining valid and consistent data.

Although we are still in the middle of our conversion, we can already see the light getting brighter at the end of the tunnel. Our catalog team is excited to embrace the standard and become more involved in the process.

Brian Griffin, Interamerican Motor Corp. (IMC)

## Dues are Due

NCMA dues invoices were distributed late in 2009. Membership costs \$200 and qualifies you for a \$200 discount on the cost of the conference. But, more importantly, NCMA members in good standing are eligible for the Catalog Excellence Awards, the Aftermarket Catalog Professional certificate and are sure to receive all of the communications and conference materials from headquarters.

If you have any questions or need a replacement dues invoice, e-mail [ncma@aftermarket.org](mailto:ncma@aftermarket.org).

## Survey Says...



The NCMA has commissioned the AAIA Market Research department to survey the membership so that we can understand the profile of a typical aftermarket catalog operation. How does your headcount, organizational structure and vendor technology selection compare to comparably-sized companies among your peers? The NCMA membership survey will enable members to benchmark their own research and publishing departments.

You are invited to answer a few confidential questions about the size and structure of your catalog operations. No individual answers to this survey will be revealed. The summarized results will be shared exclusively with the NCMA membership as a member benefit. If you have not completed the survey, refer to your invitation e-mail.

### Notes from the President

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With help from the professional staff at AAIA, your board has been able to make progress on several important initiatives. One is the NCMA Member Survey about cataloging operations. We will share the results with the NCMA membership but it's important that you complete the survey so we get an accurate picture for you to benchmark against. If you have not completed the survey, refer to your invitation e-mail.

I've been working with Brian Cruickshank and the University of the Aftermarket to design our professional certificate program for Aftermarket Catalog Professionals (ACP). We will unveil this long-awaited program at the conference and hope to award many ACP designations at the 2011 Knowledge Exchange.

I want to draw your attention to a great contribution by Brian Griffin of IMC on page 2 of this newsletter. He's promised to keep us informed as his company completes their migration from AAIA Legacy to an ACES-native catalog solution. Thanks, Brian.

We're almost 100 days out from the 37th annual Knowledge Exchange. I hope to see you there. All of the materials have been posted on our Web site so register today by visiting [www.ncmacat.org](http://www.ncmacat.org). **Mark** □

## NCMA ACP Certificate Program

Conceptually, the proposed NCMA certificate program is a concrete way to codify and more accurately define the skills and experiences to become a professional catalog manager. More specifically (and perhaps more importantly), a certificate program denotes a path that professionals can follow in order to develop the skills, contacts and knowledge that define today's Automotive Catalog Professional (ACP).

Over the past few months, a program of requirements has been created to determine the qualifications and necessary skills to be demonstrated to achieve the ACP certificate. Working with Northwood University, the NCMA board is pleased that such significant progress has been made, and the results and details and requirements will be presented during the next NCMA conference in San Antonio, April 24-27, 2010.

Northwood University and the University of the Aftermarket will set up and manage this certificate program for each individual attending the conference, managing all aspects of the program including participant transcripts (updating and sending out electronic notices), setting up participant files on an on-going basis, CEU accreditation of identified programs and the on-going management of all aspects of the program. When completed, participants will be awarded certificates of achievement at the award ceremony at the following conference after completion. This information will be available after the official launch of the program on our NCMA Web site, and the University of the Aftermarket Web site.



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## Board Openings Your Association Needs You

At the end of the Knowledge Exchange conference there will be several vacancies on the NCMA Board of varying lengths of term. Serving on the board is a great way to influence the direction of your association and contribute to the organization. To be considered for a board position or to learn more about what's involved, e-mail Mark Richardson at [mark@libtrade.com](mailto:mark@libtrade.com) or call 734-326-4885.