

Finish Line

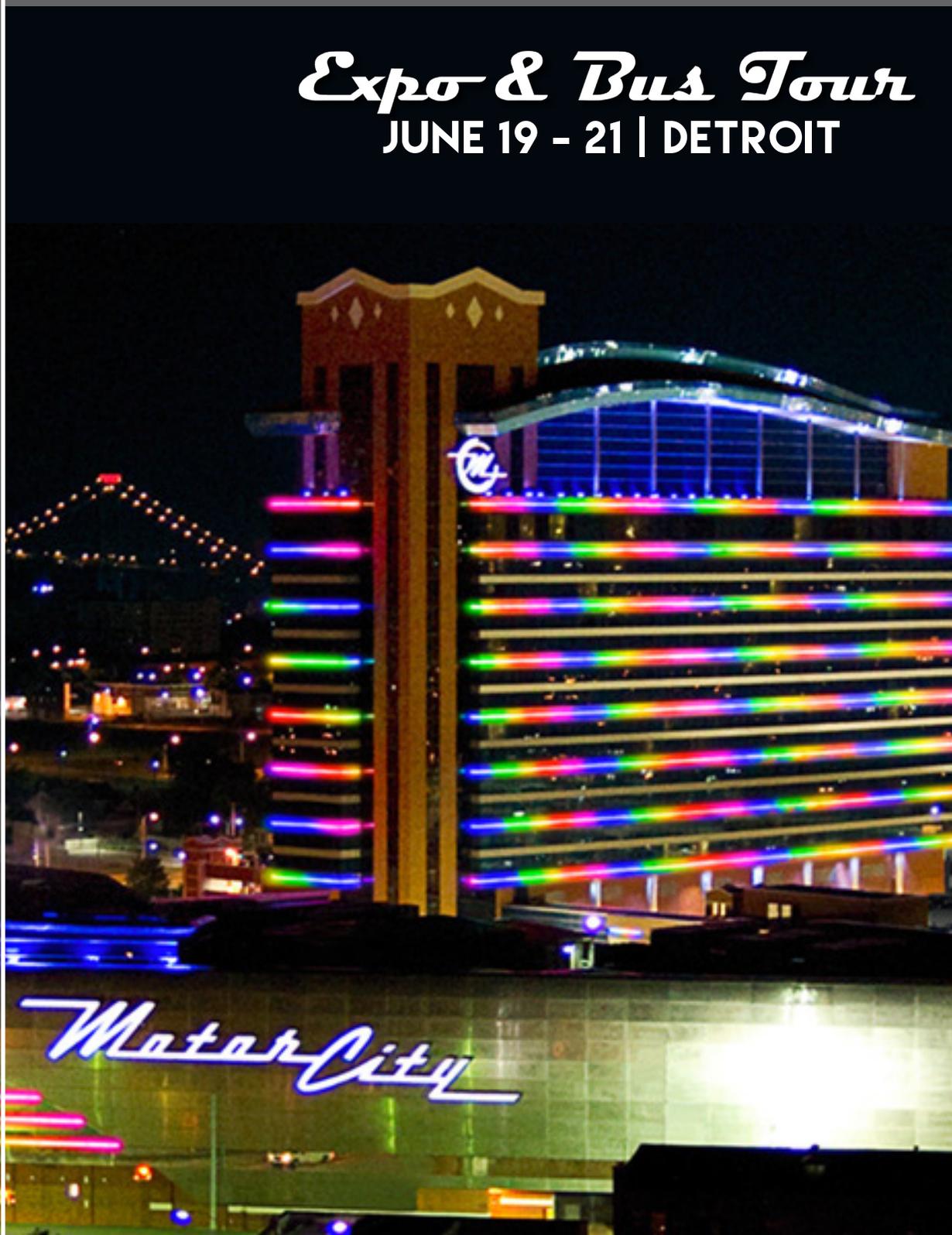
QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE MIDWEST CARWASH ASSOCIATION

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Expo & Bus Tour JUNE 19 - 21 | DETROIT



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MCA is a membership organization that promotes the interests of Midwest Carwash Operators through interaction, education and information. The *Finish Line* is a quarterly newsletter published by the MCA. Opinions expressed by guest writers do not necessarily reflect views of the MCA. Acceptance of advertising does not imply endorsement or approval of the product or service advertised. All articles submitted will be considered for publication and accepted at the approval of the editor and MCA Board. The MCA reserves the right to edit submissions for accuracy, clarity and length.

Please send address changes, membership inquiries, and advertising requests to the address listed above.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT



By Paul Coffman, Breton Auto Wash

Breaks, Buses and Booths

Breaks

As Spring breaks, so do car parts in our washes that have been damaged by winter driving. Don't be that person that is dealing with phone calls from angry customers because something fell off their car in your wash. Be proactive:

- Regularly review with your managers and staff what to look for with each car that comes to your wash, looking for potential problems.
- Inform your managers and staff what to say to the customer whose vehicle should not go through the wash tunnel.
- Teach your managers and staff what steps they need to take in the event that a car is damaged in your wash (what to say, what not to say, what to do, what not to do).

Buses

Plans are moving forward for our next carwash bus tour at the end of the Expo on June 21st. There is so much that we can learn from each other for all to be prosperous. The first tour was so well received that we had to add on an additional bus and I hope that this one is as successful or better. The tour is scheduled to include four stops and lunch. Space is limited, so register soon.

Booths

We have a new location for the Expo this year. The Expo is June 19-21st at MotorCity Casino and Hotel in Detroit. Once again, we will have vendors from around the country for you to meet, discover new industry technology, and attend educational forums at the largest car wash show in the Midwest.

Additional details for both the Expo and Bus Tour are available on the website at: <http://midwestcarwash.com/events> or you can also get further information or register for either event or both by contacting MCA at: 1-800-610-4512.

~Paul

Mister Car Wash Enters Grand Rapids with Southland Auto Wash Acquisition

Mister Car Wash has expanded its presence into Michigan with the acquisition of Southland Auto Wash based in Grand Rapids, according to Casey Lindsay, Director of Acquisitions. "The Ellis family and the team at Southland are stand outs in the car wash industry and we are proud to fold them into the Mister Car Wash family," said Lindsay.

Southland Auto Wash operates 6 locations in the greater Grand Rapids area.

"Our family has been washing cars in the Grand Rapids community since 1950 and we're grateful for the support and success we've had here," said Mark Ellis. "As we looked to the future of not only our business but our people we knew that Mister Car Wash would be respectful of our legacy and community and give us more room to grow."

The acquisition of the Southland marks the first Mister Car Wash owned locations in the state of Michigan. "We are excited to expand our brand into Michigan and having the opportunity to enter a market with a car wash chain such as Southland is special," said John Lai, President and CEO of Mister Car Wash. "We found a strong alignment of core values with the Southland team and have been inspired by their commitment to the community and their people. We plan to continue to build on the great work the Ellis family has done and are looking forward to sharing our brand with the Grand Rapids community."

For information about services and career opportunities with Mister Car Wash, please visit www.mistercarwash.com.

About Mister Car Wash

Headquartered in Tucson, Arizona, Mister Car Wash operates 212 car washes and 34 express lubes in 20 states. The Mister Car Wash brand is anchored in quality, friendliness and our commitment to creating memorable customer experiences. People are what make us successful and allow us to achieve high operational standards with unparalleled customer service. Through our commitment to excellence, we continue to recruit and retain top talent, develop best-in-class training programs and invest in employee benefits that cultivate a positive company culture. The Mister Car Wash experience is about inspiring potential and giving both our employees and customers the motivation to be their best. To learn more, please visit us in our stores or online at www.mistercarwash.com.

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Top Six Car Wash Marketing Ideas for 2017

By Anne Brower, Diamond Shine

Looking for new ideas on how to market your carwash marketing ideas wash?

We have some great ideas for 2017!

Marketing is constantly evolving, and the era of putting an ad in the newspaper and calling it a day is long gone. Today, consumers want to engage with your brand in increasingly new and different ways. If you want to stand out, you need to get with the times.

Here are six car wash marketing ideas that will modernize your business and resonate with your customers.

1. GET SOCIAL

If you haven't thrown your hat in the social media ring, there's no time like the present. As a business to consumer (B2C) facing brand, social media is a great low cost way to get your business in front of your audience.

If you don't know where to start, start with Facebook. Facebook is an empire. Over 1.23 billion (that's with a B!) people use Facebook every day, with five new profiles created every second.

Make a page, invite all your friends, and start posting.

Because car washes are super visual, Instagram should also be a focus if you can manage more than one account. Post pictures of squeaky clean wheels and your new car wash packages or ask your customers to post photos next to their clean car or with one of your employees who they had a great experience with. Be sure to ask them to tag you!

The idea is to give a window into the persona of your business and allow people to connect with you. A powerful connection creates interest and excitement for your brand and translates into more visits.

2. BLOG, BABY!

Starting a blog and providing information on your expertise is a great way to organically (AKA car wash marketing ideascheaply!) boost your search engine optimization, and increase traffic to your website.

You can use your blog to help position you as an industry leader with articles on new items, reviews of different techniques, and more. It can also function as a booster of your overall brand recognition if you choose to feature blogs about the history of the business, employee spotlights, and customer spotlights. Once you post the blogs, don't forget to push them out to your social media following to complete the loop. The main goal here is to get more people thinking and learning about your business and translate that into more visits on site.

3. DIGITIZE THAT LOCATION

Are you up to date with Google? A car wash visit is based a lot around location, so ensure that you can be found by updating your Google information.

Google provides a step-by-step resource here.

4. GO MOBILE

According to Google's research more than 50% of search queries in the world are being conducted on mobile devices. A recent report from the firm Hitwise, explored this even further and found that for the US specifically, roughly 58% of overall searches are being done on mobile.

By making sure your website, emails, and any digital presence is mobile friendly, you can be a part of the mobile movement and make it easier for customers to find you.

5. VIDEO IS KING OF CONTENT!

In an industry like the car wash industry, you have a huge advantage visually. Soapy, frothy, cars make for striking visual content! A point of view video giving viewers a window into what the car experiences during the wash process can be a fun and different way to drive interest in your business. It's also a great way to showcase marketable features inside your car wash that are otherwise hidden unless you are going through it.

Social video has exploded over last year. According to a report by Cisco, by 2019:

- Video will account for 80 percent of global internet traffic
- Nearly a million minutes of video will be shared every second

Additionally, video can be repurposed at trade shows, on your website, or even cut up into blog posts, so they make for a very versatile and long lasting investment.

6. CREATE A CHARITY PROGRAM

A great way to get new faces to your car wash is to partner with a charity and host a day where if mentioned, a certain amount of the wash ticket goes to that charity. The charity will be motivated to get people to come, and once they do, make sure they have a great experience from start to finish.

Posting this on your digital platforms will give this event a longer shelf life. It also helps humanize your business. People will know you stand for more than just profits and are a part of the community in a larger way.

Diamond Shine is a car wash chemical manufacturer dedicated to increasing its customer's profitability. For more tips on marketing and branding, download our e-book at: info.diamondshine.com/ebook

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Expo & Bus Tour

You will not want to miss our 2017 combined Expo and Bus Tour! In 2017 we move to the Motor City and specifically the state of the art MotorCity Casino Hotel in the heart of Detroit's revamped downtown.

Plan to attend and experience everything MCA has to offer: exhibits, educational sessions, networking, and a chance to visit four state-of-the-art washes in the metro region. All of this centered in Detroit's premier casino featuring over 2,800 slots, 59 table games, and much more.

SCHEDULE

MONDAY, JUNE 19TH

1:00 PM - 7:00 PM Exhibitor Set-Up

TUESDAY, JUNE 20TH

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Registration

10:00 AM - 5:00 PM Trade Show Expo Open

5:00 PM - 9:00 PM Exhibitor Tear Down

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM MCA Annual Dinner

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21ST

7:00 AM - 12:00 PM Exhibitor Tear Down

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Continental Breakfast

10:30 AM - 2:00 PM Carwash Tour

**This schedule is subject to change, check our website for the most up to date schedule.*

TOUR LOCATIONS

- Canton Auto Wash (Canton)
- Jax Kar Wash (Southfield)
- Paul's Auto Wash (Clawson)
- Pro Car Wash (Troy)

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JUNE 19 - 21

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2901 Grand River Avenue
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For Reservations Call: 866-STAY-MCC (866-7829-622)
or visit <https://www.motorcitycasino.com/Hotel.aspx>

Reserve a room by May 30th, 2017 to receive the discounted rate of \$159 per night (plus taxes). Mention Midwest Carwash Association when making your reservation. (Subject to availability).

MCA ANNUAL DINNER

Join us for dinner, awards and networking on **June 20th** following the show. Dinner, including a hosted bar, is \$55 per person. Bring your staff, co-workers and customers for a fabulous meal and networking. Each registered exhibitor can receive one complimentary ticket, see details on registration form.

FAST TALKS

In 2017 education is king and we will have a variety of Fast Talks to leave every attendee taking away key information to take back to your wash.

Fast Talks will take place on the Expo floor during show hours so you never leave the action. Potential topics are below and are subject to change. For the most up-to-date list please visit www.MidwestCarWash.com.

- Social Media Tips and Tricks
- Free Vacs - Yes or No?
- LED Lighting
- Water Management

Exhibitors - interested in hosting a Fast Talk?
Call us at 800.610.4512 or see the Exhibitor Prospectus for more information.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER VISIT
WWW.MIDWESTCARWASH.COM



Saving Self-Serve Car Washes from Social Media Wrath

Social media reviews can make or break a car wash business.

How to prevent business from driving away

By Dan Pecora, Erie Brush and Manufacturing Corporation

Rainy days were once the bane of every self-serve car wash owner. Bad weather meant no revenue. These days an entirely different deluge is washing away business. With no staff on site to soothe dissatisfied customers, proprietors have just a few tools at their disposal to battle against a flood of angry one-star rants on social media sites.

In today's world, where people search out customer satisfaction reviews before they buy online, choose where to eat, and even before opening wide for a new dentist, social media can make or break a business. Bad reviews are like repellents, keeping customers from ever stepping foot into your establishment, and that can mean more than losing out on income; it can mean going out of business.

For self-serve car washes the best defense is to show customers you care about their car washing experience by installing high quality equipment. This demonstrates you are going the extra mile to ensure their car is properly cleaned and safe from any damage. Leaving any marks on a customer's car will almost always lead to them leaving a few marks in the way of hostile social media reviews.

It is not difficult to find online proof that patrons don't mince words if they are unhappy with equipment. *"Brush doesn't foam. Very dirty place. DO NOT USE THIS PLACE!!!"* – Sam I. Clearly maintenance of a car wash facility is important: *"this is the worst self car wash I've ever been to. Everything is not maintained."* Julian S. And some customers make note of the owner's indifference: *Whoever the proprietor of this car wash is clearly doesn't give a rat's *** about their revenues nor their business reputation.* – David P.

The message from customers is clear: take care of us and your facility or we will tell the community to avoid your establishment. Surely, this isn't good for business.

A SOFT DEFENSE

Successful self-serve car wash managers say they avoid epic failure by paying attention to details. The motorist's experience is improved, for example, by simply keeping the facility clean.

However, the available tools must work; the vending equipment must work, the hoses must, the blank must...

But one of the most critical elements is the foaming brush that – if improperly maintained – can leave a mark on the paint surface. One unhappy customer left this online review: *"The brush with soap did not activate but was so rough it probably would have ripped the paint right off the car anyway."* – Artemis X. Another customer claims, *"I would give this place less than one star if possible."*

There was a broom-like brush on the side, but I didn't use it. It was heavy and just seemed like it would have damaged my car because the bristles were hard and covered in mud. Epic Fail" – Luke J.

Self-serve managers say a satisfying foaming brush experience is the best defense against lousy online reviews.

Dave DuGoff, owner of College Park Car Wash in College Park, Md., a high volume location with five self-service bays and three automatic bays, says cheap brushes may anger car owners.

"Synthetic brushes made of nylon, polyester, and polypropylene generally have shorter filaments with fewer bristles on the brush head. As a result, they wear out quickly, bend out of shape, and are coarse and abrasive if used aggressively," DuGoff says. That's why they are among the usual suspects when drivers discover marks on their cars—and post a scathing online review.

Tom Hoffman Jr., CEO of Hoffman Car Wash, an operation with 19 car washes throughout upstate New York that was started in the 1960s by his parents, agrees.

“When foaming brushes first appeared in self-serve bays, the nylon type brushes were coarse, harsh to the vehicle surface, and tended to bend out of shape,” he says. “Painted vehicle surfaces have become much softer in recent decades, so it’s even more important to use a gentler brush at car washes today.”

Hoffman discovered an unlikely source for creating a natural foaming brush that is gentle and yet stands up to prolonged use—hog’s hair. It is very soft and tapered so that the tips of each bristle are tender while also effective when scrubbing is required. And they are resilient so they don’t permanently bend out of shape like synthetic products. Hoffman says one hog’s hair brush can outlive 3-4 cheaper options.

“The hog’s hair brushes are noticeably softer than our previous brushes, and provide our self-service customers with a much better, safer wash. Customers can feel the difference,” says Hoffman.

Hoffman and DuGoff have found the hog’s hair brushes manufactured in the U.S. are superior to cheaper knockoffs manufactured overseas.

Hoffman has installed the product in 58 self-service bays. He also purchases non-foaming hog’s hair brushes for supplementary washing at 13 conveyorized car washes. Hog’s hair brushes have the ability to quickly recover their natural shape even when bent 90-degrees.

DuGoff embraces the long game of keeping customers satisfied. “I decided years ago that I’d use hog’s hair foaming brushes because their longer, denser bristles are more inviting to customers. While they cost a bit more than standard brushes, they’ve helped us earn a reputation for quality that’s brought us repeat business and allowed us to remain a high-volume operation.”

Statistics reveal that hog hair brushes may cost more than synthetics, but they provide much higher quality, extending the life of the brush, which in the

long run actually saves car wash owners money.

“The hog’s hair brushes offer us longer brush life, which lowers our cost of ownership,” says Hoffman.

PROPER LUBRICATION, REPEAT BUSINESS

Better bristles improve foaming brushes, but so does proper distribution of good quality foam to cleanse the customer’s car and lubricate the brush for washing. A steady flow not only makes customers happy it also helps prevent damage to the car’s surface from brushes that are improperly lubricated. Traditional equipment typically includes only 2-3 foam holes per brush.

“With too few foam holes per brush, traditional brushes don’t provide proper lubrication between brush and car, or between the brush hairs themselves,” says Freddie Seniw, owner of Easy Clean Car Wash, with seven locations in the greater Chicago area. “Large diameter nylon filaments may also carry larger foreign objects such as sand that could damage a paint job if the brush head is not properly lubricated with soapy foam.”

To ensure the proper lubrication there are a few manufacturers that are now including brushes with more holes to release the foam. Utilizing six holes on a typical 9-inch brush, the soapy foam will spread more thoroughly and more evenly, allowing the brush to glide smoothly over the car surface.

“With more foam holes per brush, the continuous flow of soapy foam helps to cleanse dirt, sand, and foreign objects off the brush, keeping the brush head cleaner so it won’t mark. Customers come back because they know they can depend on my brushes and equipment to take care of their cars,” he says.

Customers who leave satisfied will not only not write negative reviews that will cripple your business, but they just might scribe out some 5 star reviews that boost your bottom line.

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