BY THE NUMBERS
Principles of Automotive Parts Management

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Preface

The purpose of this book is to present basic parts management principles along with the relevant business and personnel management techniques in a format that can be easily understood by current and future parts managers, parts department staff members, and senior managers in related fields.

This book cannot make you an instant success in parts management, nor can it teach you all there is to know about the subject. As with any other profession, mastery is achieved only through knowledge combined with hands-on experience. The more knowledge you command, however, the better prepared you will be.

Many parts managers underestimate the amount of business management expertise that must be combined with parts knowledge to efficiently run a parts department. Many past and present managers were good counter people thrust into the manager's position simply because they could instantly recall part numbers or look them up faster than anyone else, completely unaware of the business and personnel management skills that were needed. Many managers and aspiring managers I have come in contact with are whizzes with automotive systems but know little about asset and human resource management.

Due to current market trends and the high cost of inventories, future parts managers will have to be more business oriented than automobile oriented. With the exception of material provided by manufacturers, very few resources exist to help parts managers develop the skills they need to succeed.

For these reasons, By the Numbers: Principles of Automotive Parts Management has been written for the informed and uninformed alike. Because of the broad range of responsibilities faced by today's parts managers and the differences between dealer-franchised and aftermarket parts departments, it was not possible to include every pertinent detail. Rather, the intent was to include the fundamentals that can be applied to most situations. The book thus covers not only the essentials of purchasing, inventory control, storage, and sales, but financial, personnel, facility, and marketing management as well.
For a person new to parts management, this book offers a realistic perspective on what you can expect as a parts manager and what will be expected of you. Existing parts managers will find it to be an excellent desk reference, combining standard procedures with new ideas and contemporary thinking. Associate department managers, general managers, and parts and service directors can use this text to better understand how to work with the parts department to the benefit of their own department and the organization as a whole.

The illustrative cases in this book are based on real experience; however, all names and companies are fictitious.