BY THE NUMBERS
Principles of Automotive
Parts Management

Gary J. Naples

Published by:
Society of Automotive Engineers, Inc.
400 Commonwealth Drive
Warrendale, PA 15096-0001
U.S.A.
Phone: (412) 776-4841
Fax: (412) 776-5760

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Naples, Gary J., 1953-

By the numbers : principles of automotive parts management / Gary J. Naples.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references (p.) and index.

ISBN 1-56091-520-X : \$29.00

1. Automobile supplies industry—Management. I. Title.

HD9710.3.A2N36 1994

629.2'068'8—dc20

94-21144

CIP

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ISBN 1-56091-520-X

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Third printing

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SAE Order No. R-140

Contents

Preface	vii
Chapter 1 Introduction to Parts Management	1
<i>Illustrative Case: A Day in the Life of Sabrina Nichols,</i> <i>Parts Manager</i>	1
1-1 The Customers—Their Needs and Expectations	4
1-2 The Changing Market	6
1-3 A Separate Business	6
1-4 Managing for the Future	7
1-5 Summary	8
Chapter 2 Inventory Control and Management	9
<i>Illustrative Case: The Demise of Downtown Auto Parts</i>	9
2-1 The Purpose of Inventory Control and Management	11
2-2 Types of Systems	12
2-3 Basic Information	16
2-4 Selecting an Inventory Control System	16
2-5 Parts Life Cycle	20
2-6 Inventory Evaluation	31
2-7 Security	38
2-8 Physical Inventory	40
2-9 Summary	44
Chapter 3 Purchasing	45
<i>Illustrative Case: Controlling Purchasing at Import Automotive</i> <i>Parts Stores</i>	45
3-1 Fundamental Objectives	48
3-2 Organized Purchase Planning	49
3-3 Purchasing Policy	54
3-4 Order Types	55
3-5 Vendor Selection, Cooperation with Vendors, and Unethical Vendor Methods	57

3-6	Purchase Orders	59
3-7	Receiving and Shipping	60
3-8	Special Orders	63
3-9	Document Flow and Vendor Invoices	70
3-10	Summary	75
Chapter 4	Sales	77
	<i>Illustrative Case: Where Have All the Customers Gone?</i>	77
4-1	Gross Profit and Net Profit	79
4-2	Profit Margin and Markup	80
4-3	Sources of Income	82
4-4	The Service Department	82
4-5	Internal Parts Sales	85
4-6	Retail Parts Sales	85
4-7	Wholesale Parts Sales	90
4-8	Sales and Profit Evaluation	95
4-9	Price Escalation and Sale Matrix	101
4-10	Security	102
4-11	Summary	103
Chapter 5	Financial Management	105
	<i>Illustrative Case: The Phantom Supplies</i>	105
5-1	Overview	107
5-2	The DOC Sheet	107
5-3	The Income Statement	110
5-4	The Management Report	113
5-5	Quick Reference Chart of Calculations	114
5-6	Summary	116
Chapter 6	Facility Development and Warehousing	117
	<i>Illustrative Case: It's Only a Warehouse</i>	117
6-1	Facility Requirements	120
6-2	Inventory Volume versus Storage Space	121
6-3	Storage Equipment	123
6-4	Bin Location System	128
6-5	Department Layout and Expansion	130
6-6	Planning for Reorganization or Relocation	134
6-7	Support Equipment	138
6-8	Additional Facility Requirements	138
6-9	Summary	141

Chapter 7 Personnel Management and Development	143
<i>Illustrative Case: Profiles in Personnel Management</i>	143
7-1 Management's Responsibility to Develop Personnel	145
7-2 Organizational and Individual Development	149
7-3 Managing by Goals and Objectives	169
7-4 Effective Planning	175
7-5 Communicating	180
7-6 Summary	183
 Chapter 8 Advertising and Marketing	185
Sharon J. Naples and Gary J. Naples	
<i>Illustrative Case: Business Is Good. Why Advertise?</i>	185
8-1 Overview	187
8-2 Who You Can Contact for Help	187
8-3 Marketing	188
8-4 The Advertising Budget	189
8-5 In-Store Merchandising	196
8-6 Summary	198
 Glossary	199
 Case Study	205
 Selected Bibliography	209
 Index	211

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 after-market 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.