



Testimonials at PDG's May Maine Meeting

I attended the PRO Dealer Group (PDG) meeting on May 19-20 at the Sebasco Harbor Resort in Phippsburg, Maine. Why Maine? Beyond the incredible scenery, it gave PDG members the opportunity to tour one of the member dealerships, Budget Document Technology in nearby Lewiston, Maine.



I serve as staff liaison for the group. BTA Marketing Director Valerie Briseno serves as the staff liaison for the association's Select Dealer Group (SDG). Both groups meet several times each year in person and via Zoom on a regular basis. Many of the groups' members have now known each other for years and relish the opportunity to help one another, sharing best practices. Both groups work with John Hey and Todd Johnson of Strategic Business Associates.

During the recent PDG meeting, I pulled a few members aside for brief on-camera interviews. Below are excerpts from those interviews, giving you a sense of the value of membership.

What are your thoughts on your first in-person meeting?

"I called the office and talked to a key person in my organization and told him that, without a doubt, he needs to come to the next event. To see 35-plus people in a room, all with the same shared goal of trying to improve their dealerships and themselves — it's just a huge benefit." — *Rob Richardson, owner and founder, Allied Document Solutions & Services Inc., Swedesboro, New Jersey*

Outside of the meetings, to what degree do you connect with your fellow PDG members?

"Some of my good friends are folks I've met through the PRO Dealer Group. I'm traveling to California to sit with one for a couple of

days. I'm also traveling to Pennsylvania. It allows you the unique opportunity to see what they do ... [Joining PDG] is one of the best decisions I've ever made." — *Jeff Cousins, president, Kraft Business Systems, Kentwood, Michigan*

When the COVID-19 pandemic arrived, PDG members began meeting regularly via Zoom. How did those initial calls help you?

"When we decided to go weekly [with the Zoom calls], things were changing so fast. [The calls provided] input from 20 to 25 other people on how they were handling the pandemic on everything, such as people working from home. The knowledge base in those calls was just incredible." — *Mike Ardry, president, Automated Business Solutions, Warwick, Rhode Island*

How has membership in PDG provided you the opportunity to learn from your fellow PDG members?

"I've called Roger [Hendrix, Hendrix Business Systems, Matthews, North Carolina] on many occasions and said, 'Hey Roger, what would you do in this type of situation?' He has been really instrumental in helping us ... We do a lot of in-house leasing. So, we got with Jerry [Carlisle, Business World, Little Rock, Arkansas] and [at the Maine meeting] he showed us a whole bunch of things that we didn't know. So, we're going to go back and start implementing them now." — *Stephen Valenta, president, Offix, Gainesville, Virginia*

"Sharing best practices is just amazing. You find out what you're doing well, what you're not doing well. I also love the fact that I can share some of our best practices. It really makes me feel good." — *Kim Valenta, vice president, Offix, Gainesville, Virginia*

If you have an interest in joining a BTA peer group, visit www.bta.org/PRODealerGroup and www.selectdealergroup.org. ■

— Brent Hoskins

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FLASHBACK



The association's magazine cover 63 years ago this month — the NOMDA Spokesman, June 1959.