



Advisory Link

Fall 2007 Newsletter

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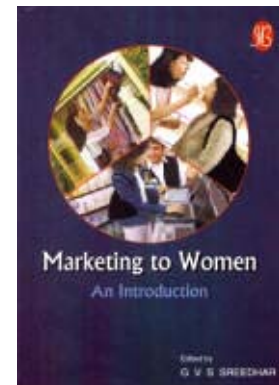
What's New with Advisory Link?

Advisory Link is going into the fourth quarter with some exciting prospects. With the success of our current Women's Advisory Board program, we wanted to share the concept. Therefore, we are in the process of developing a model for an advisory board aimed at small to mid-size businesses. By creating these new advisory boards, smaller companies will be able to tap into a wealth of knowledge, contacts and expertise that will assist them in developing a sound business plan for growth and financial stability.

We are also setting up alliances with a variety of companies in order to offer additional services to our clients. Our main focus will remain on the women's market where we offer a menu of programs including consulting, [Women's Advisory Boards](#), [Exec-U-Links](#), speaking, training, coaching and events. Advisory Link will continue to work with companies who want to increase their market share either by selling more successfully to women or by effectively recruiting, retaining and promoting women within their organizations.

In October Gerry Myers spoke to the [Women's Business Council-Southwest](#) on the benefits of creating Advisory Boards as well as how to be selected to serve on one. In November Advisory Link will spend time in Massachusetts, Connecticut and New York participating in a variety of meetings and events.

Lastly, Myers was asked to contribute a chapter in the recently released book, *Marketing to Women: An Introduction*, which was published by the Institute of Chartered Financial Analysts of India. It is their first book on marketing to women.



Women in High Places in Car Dealerships

While most people are surprised at how many women are running very successful dealerships, the numbers are still staggeringly low. This article is going to focus on a few of the incredible women who have persevered and built extremely profitable companies.

The chart below gives you a statistical look at the manufacturers and what their percentage of women dealers is compared to the total number of franchises.

Manufacturers	Total Number of Franchises	Women Dealers	Percentage of Women Dealers	Ethnic Minority Women Dealers
Acura	264	7	2.65	--
BMW	291	34	11.68	4
Daimler Chrysler	11,414	59	.52	11
Ford **	7,866	574	7.30	37

General Motors	14,504	504	3.47	28
Honda	1,016	41	4.04	--
Hyundai	695	17	2.45	2
Kia	639	28	6.10	--
Mercedes-Benz	343	17	4.96	6
Nissan	1,071	32	2.99	1
Subaru	588	24	4.08	--
Toyota	1,224	34	2.78	3
2005 Totals***	42,715	1,429	3.35	94

* As of 2005 according to National Association of Minority Automotive Dealers

** Ford includes Lincoln, Mercury, Jaguar, Volvo and Land Rover

*** Total includes all the above plus Audi, Infiniti, Lexus, Mazda, MINI, Mitsubishi, Porsche and Volkswagen

Women have come into the business in a variety of ways. Some inherited it from their fathers, others from their husbands, but many started in sales or attended the Dealer Academy and purchased their own dealerships. Some have grown their businesses to mega enterprises while others enjoy success on a smaller scale. One of the secrets to their accomplishments is their love for the industry. Many say "once the automotive industry is in your blood, it's there to stay." Today, not only are fathers leaving dealerships to their daughters rather than their sons, but so are mothers.



Juanita Powell Baranco is the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Baranco Automotive Group, which she co-founded with her husband, Gregory Baranco in 1978. It was one of the first African American owned car dealerships in the metropolitan Atlanta area. Today the dealerships consist of Baranco Buick Pontiac-GMC Truck of Liburn, GA; Baranco Acura of Morrow, GA; and Mercedes-Benz of Buckhead, GA. The group is one of the most successful urban businesses in the world, with annual sales reaching nearly \$100 million dollars. In addition to her enormous success as a top business leader, Baranco is equally influential in the education sector of Georgia. With the strong influence of her mother, who was an educator, and her interest in her four children's education, Baranco has served as chair of the DeKalb County Education Task Force and as a member of the Georgia State Board of Education. She was appointed by Governor Zell Miller to the Board of Regents and in 1995 became the first African American woman to chair the board. She also serves on the Board of Trustees of Clark Atlanta University. Her business and community activities have won her numerous awards.



Marion Luna Brem was diagnosed with a terminal illness and told she had only 2 to 5 years to live. Despite the fact that she was recently divorced and had an emergency hysterectomy, a radical mastectomy and daily chemotherapy treatments, she put on a wig and went to auto dealerships asking for a sales position. She was turned down 16 times. At the 17th dealership the sales manager felt that she was "nervy" enough to succeed and hired her. Her determination paid off. A year later she won the "Salesman of the Year" award. Within four years, Brem opened her first dealership, Love Chrysler, Inc. in Corpus Christi. With her two sons active in her businesses, she opened six additional companies including a second auto dealership in Texas, an ad agency and a real estate holding company. A few years ago she wrote a book, [The 7 Greatest Truths About Successful Women](#) followed by her latest book [Women Make The Best Salesmen](#). Her numerous professional accomplishments, both inside and outside the male-dominated automotive industry, include being inducted into "The International Automotive Hall of Fame." She currently travels as an international speaker.



Jeanne Brewer's career began with Honda after she answered a newspaper ad seeking high achievers in 1983. Following her success in selling cars, Honda sent Brewer to open a "new" franchise in Pasadena, CA. Two years later she became General Manager of Acura of Pasadena and later bought her employer out. As President and General Manager, Brewer's responsibilities encompasses every department in the dealership - ranging from new and used vehicle sales, finance, administration, service and parts. In 2005 Brewer moved her dealership to a beautiful new facility she built in Glendale after outgrowing her historic Pasadena location. Subsequently, Brewer was named Business Woman of the Year for the City of Glendale. She has also served on boards and in leadership roles with the National Association of Women Business Owners, Greater Los Angeles New Car Dealers Association, Glendale and Pasadena Chambers of Commerce and Foothill Workforce Investment Board.

Rita Case is the Chief Operating Officer of the Rick Case Automotive Group, and, along with her



husband Rick, operate 15 dealerships in three states with more than 1000 employees. Working together, their dealership group has become one of the top 20 performing groups in the country. The Acura dealership in Ft. Lauderdale has been recognized as the World's Largest Volume Dealer seven years in a row. Rick Case Honda in south Florida is the world's largest dealership with over half a million square feet and holds the sales record for the most new Hondas sold in a single month, as well as one full year. In addition to the dealerships, Rita Case is devoted to children's causes. She and her husband built the Rick and Rita Case Boys & Girls Club, pledged \$450,000 to the Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital and provided thousands of bicycles to underprivileged children through the Rick Case Bikes for Kids program since 1982.



Irma Elder is an automotive industry icon. Elder was born in Xicotencalt, Mexico, and moved with her family to Florida as a teen. She spoke only a few words of English. In November 1983, her husband James died suddenly leaving Irma to take over the reins of the auto dealership business they owned in Troy, Michigan. She became the first woman to own a Ford dealership in the greater Detroit area. Today, the Elder Automotive Group has grown to encompass not only Elder Ford, but Jaguar of Troy and Saab of Troy (both one of the top dealerships of their franchise in North America in volume of automotive sales), Aston Martin of Troy, Signature Ford Lincoln-Mercury-Jeep of Owosso, Michigan; Signature Ford of Perry, Michigan and the newest dealerships: Jaguar and Aston Martin of Tampa, Florida; Saab of Tampa plus Jaguar Land Rover of Lakeside and Saab of Lakeside, the last three all located in Macomb County, Michigan. The Elder Automotive Group consistently ranks in the top 10 Hispanic Business Magazine's top 500 Hispanic-owned corporations (the only woman-owned corporation in the top ten).



Lynn Kimmel and her mother Freda Lockhart represent two generations of women-owned dealerships with a third generation, Kimmel's daughter Kristin Smith coming onboard. Smith recently graduated from NADA Academy and is now working in all aspects of the business. In 1976 Kimmel joined her mother's Cadillac dealership as the Finance and Insurance Manager. By 1978 she was running her own dealership. Kimmel, along with her husband Chuck and brother, Marc Lockhart, grew the business to include two Cadillac, three Saturn and two Hummer dealerships in the greater Indianapolis, IN area. Kimmel is a member of the Saturn Franchise Operations Team, the National Dealer Council and the Indiana State Chamber Board of Directors. She is a past board member of the Indianapolis Auto Trade Association and the Auto Dealers of Indiana. She also co-chairs the Saturn Regional Marketing Task Force and the GM Women's Retail Initiative.



Linda Lovering and husband Rich purchased their first Volvo and Isuzu dealership in Concord, NH in 1996 (Presently Lovering Volvo and Mitsubishi). In 1998 they opened another Volvo location in Nashua, NH, in which Linda is the dealer principle. In order to better serve the needs of their northern customers, they built a ground up facility in Meredith, NH in 2005. In addition to their business activities, they shared the philosophy of "Giving back to the Community." Ms. Lovering is on the Better Business Bureau board, the Boys and Girls Club and Partnership for a DrugfreeNH. Both are involved with the newly formed Laconia Boys and Girls Club and both have been President of the Nashua Pastoral Care Center.



Pat Moran is the daughter of legendary auto dealer Jim Moran, founder of the largest private Toyota distributorship in the world. Pat Moran didn't enter the family business until 1983. Moran refused to start in the corporate offices, as her father wanted. Instead, she took a job as a clerk, working her way up through the ranks and taking on a variety of positions—including General Manager of Southeast Toyota, JM's distribution arm—until she was named CEO in 1991. During her 10-year reign as CEO, Ms. Moran established the largest-volume Lexus dealership, JM Lexus of Margate, FL. She also continued to over-see Southeast Toyota Distributors and the finance and insurance organizations World Omni and JM&A for all brands of retail outlets. Moran, who became Chair of the \$9.4 billion diversified privately-held automotive company in 2003, retired January 2, 2007. Forbes placed JM Enterprises as the 18th-largest privately held company in the U.S. Additionally, for nine consecutive years, the JM Family was ranked by FORTUNE® as one of the 100 Best Companies to Work For.

Lisa Schomp was only the second female to graduate from General Motors Institute (GMI) Dealer's Son School. When she took over the leadership at Ralph Schomp Automotive in 1988, one of her first moves was to institute "One Price" no-negotiation selling. That move caused a lot of



controversy in the business. According to Schomp, it was scary for the first 18 months but in the next year and a half their business increased 80 percent. Today she owns the #1-selling Honda and #1-selling BMW franchises in the Rocky Mountain Region, as well as a MINI store. Ralph Schomp Automotive has been rated the "Top Woman-owned Business" in Colorado by Colorado Biz and The Denver Business Journal. Lisa Schomp was the 2005 AYES Dealer of the Year-Automotive Youth Educational Systems award recipient and was the Colorado Automobile Dealers Association's 2007 nominee for the annual Time Magazine Quality Dealer Award. She, along with her life and business partner Mark, spend much of their time in construction meetings discussing design and build out of the 26-acres they recently purchased for their growing business.



Kitty Van Bortel owns the top selling Subaru dealership in the nation, as well as one of the most successful Ford dealerships in a multi-state area. Her automotive group is one of the fastest growing, privately-held companies in the greater Rochester, NY area. With an investment of only \$500, Van Bortel founded her first used car dealership in her front yard in 1985, which lead to her first Subaru dealership. Van Bortel Subaru was open for only a year when she was inducted into the Subaru Chairman's Roundtable...a select organization of the top 20 dealers in the nation. Customers of Van Bortel Subaru and Van Bortel Ford are offered a no-bicker price for each car with full disclosure of all costs. Twice each year, the Van Bortel dealerships conduct Girl Scout Car Care and Maintenance Workshops to teach young women to take care of their own vehicles, and a Car Buying Seminar for pediatric interns at the University of Rochester.



Barbara Volz has been in the automotive business for 25 years. She owns five dealerships in New York and Connecticut that sell a wide range of vehicles including Ford, Lincoln-Mercury, Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Nissan, Pontiac and GMC. She attributes her success to her academic background (an MBA in finance and accounting), to understanding and carefully watching the numbers and to being in touch with her people. She was a recipient of an award from the New Jersey Association of Women Business Owners for her outstanding leadership skills in 1989. Today, Volz's son and daughter are both actively involved in Volz Auto Group and are part owners in some of the dealerships.

NO PICTURE
AVAILABLE

Patty Yarbrough, who has 30 years of experience in the automotive industry, is the sole owner of McKay's Family Chrysler/Jeep/Dodge/Mitsubishi in Minnesota. In 1978 Yarbrough's father, Grant McKay, changed careers and bought a car dealership, Coon Rapids Chrysler Plymouth. Two weeks after he took over the business, the finance person quit. Yarbrough's dad asked her to join him in the business. She quit her job, took her dog and headed to Coon Rapids to run the finance department for her father. She gradually moved her way up through the ranks of the business. Wanting to expand, Yarbrough opened McKay Family Dodge on January 16, 1984. The car dealership opened with Yarbrough as dealer principal in Waite Park. Two weeks later, Yarbrough's first child, Tommy, was born. By the end of 1984, employee ranks had swelled to 19 from seven and they posted sales of \$7.5 million.

Women Automotive Dealers Exec-U-Link Continues to Grow

The [Women Automotive Dealers Exec-U-Link](#) connects dealers who are involved in the day-to-day operations of the business to share advice, experiences, expertise, camaraderie and best practices. Many of the women in the above article *Women in High Places in Car Dealerships* are in the group. The Exec-U-Link, which is limited to 12 carefully selected women who are non-competing geographically, has an opening.



Members of the group come from coast-to-coast. They hold franchises for BMW, MINI, Honda, Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Chevrolet, Cadillac, Ford, Lincoln- Mercury, Volvo, Nissan, Mitsubishi, among others.

While the automotive industry has numerous organizations that dealers can belong to, nothing is like the Women's Automotive Dealers Exec-U-Link. Imagine a room of 10-12 women dealers rather than a room with 18 to 20 dealers where one or maybe two are women. The entire dynamic shifts and the results are amazing. Additionally, between our three annual meetings, we hold conference calls to stay in touch, share success stories and discuss hot issues.

The agenda focuses on individual issues ensuring that each member receives the maximum benefit for their time and dollar

investment. The topics range from *Growing Revenues and Profits* in various departments to *Succession Planning* to *Cost-Effective Marketing, Advertising and Promotions* to *Healthcare Plans*.

Our last meeting of 2007 will be October 24-25 in Dallas. If you would like more information on this group or are interested in joining, contact Gerry at gerry@advisorylink-dfw.com or click on <http://www.advisorylink-dfw.com/womenautodealers.html>.

Trend Watch

More than 30 million women over the age of 18 are single and nearly half of women aged 45 and up are unmarried. They're unwed mothers, high-level executives and business owners; college educated and high school drop outs; administrative assistances, CFOs, doctors, lawyers and firefighters. These numbers represent a combination of divorce, death of a spouse and choosing to remain single.



According to the U.S. Census, purchases of new homes by single women are on the rise, with 57 percent of single women currently owning their homes. Single women buy homes at twice the rate of single men.

Besides real estate, single women are purchasing groceries, financial services, compact and luxury vehicles, expensive jewelry, adventure travel and many other products and services.

Quarterly Tip



A recent survey of 25 small businesses revealed three simple ideas that increased employee satisfaction: The number one thing employees wanted was a program that demonstrates recognition and appreciation. For instance, employers could devote a week to show appreciation for all employees. The second most important thing they voiced was the ability to provide input frequently to management. According to employers, input from employees has been invaluable in many different aspects of their businesses. The third most important employee "perk" was being able to participate in community service or volunteer work during the work week. This survey was very limited, but does provide food for thought for small business owners.

What are you doing to improve employee morale, productivity and retention as more Gen X, Gen Y and women are in the workforce? These groups have expressed different needs and wants as they relate to the workplace. The best way to find out what your employees want is to ask them directly.

Check Out Our Website



Go to www.AdvisoryLink-dfw.com and you will find we have been busy writing articles for www.MarketingProfs.com and *Dealer Magazine* (also online at www.dealer-magazine.com)

When you visit our website, check out the *Marketing to Women* or *Employing Women* brief quizzes on the home page, as well as the *Facts about Women* section.

Are Women Still Loyal Consumers or Is that Changing?

The future of most businesses depends on their ability to adjust to the needs and expectations of female consumers. Women have historically scored high on loyalty in consumer research studies. Female customers tend to be more loyal than their male counterparts, but they also demand more respect, professionalism and integrity from the salesperson, the retailer and the manufacturer. If they don't get the customer service they expect from your business, the loyalty will disappear and they will go elsewhere.

Women are becoming proficient in Internet shopping, which doesn't provide the same loyalty factor as face-to-face experiences. Internet shopping is increasing dramatically with women because they can do it at their convenience and they can easily compare prices without having the hassle of the store or traffic. To draw women in, retailers need to provide an enjoyable experience, not just a transaction.

Does this mean women are less loyal? No, women are still loyal customers, but it has to be earned by the merchant/service provider. Women have many more choices as consumers.



They are becoming very cognizant of the fact that they have an incredible amount of purchasing power and they are beginning to use it to demand better treatment.

If their current business associations aren't meeting their needs, they will simply find other establishments that will cater to them. Companies that continue to focus on their consumers' needs will maintain a customer-base of loyal female shoppers.

How does your business measure up? Has your business seen a noticeable increase or decrease in female customers? Do you know what keeps them coming back? Why are they loyal to you or why are they leaving? If your number one competitor were to aggressively market to your female customer-base, would they be lured away or remain loyal to you?

As helpful as it is to have all the information at our fingertips from the numerous research studies that have been done, don't overlook the obvious—asking your current female customers. Find out what they like about doing business with you? Why they come back? How could you improve your business to make their experience better? If you want information about your current customers, ask them! Consumer research indicates that women respond well to surveys. But if you want to grow your base, you might need to invest in other methods. Focus groups can provide one-time answers to questions, but a Women's Advisory Board can do so much more. Because they build a relationship with the company and you, they serve as goodwill ambassadors for you in the community. They oftentimes encourage their extensive networks to shop with you and they themselves become loyal customers. By spending the money in this way rather than on focus groups or just print and electronic media, you build a very solid base of loyal female consumers who will help you grow your business with other women. For more information on Women's Advisory Boards click here <http://www.advisorylink-dfw.com/advisoryboards.html> or contact Gerry at 817-379-0956.

KUDOS

Harris Fishman, the General Agent of First Financial Group, wrote an article and was featured in *National Underwriter Life & Health*.

Linda Denny, who has served as Interim President for several months, has been named the new President of the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) in Washington D.C.

Cheryl Stevens, vice president of Workforce and Supplier Diversity for TXU/Oncor was named board chair elect of WBENC.

Patty DeDominic has a new book, *The NEW NEW World of Work*, which will be released soon. DeDominic has just returned from Greece where she received the esteemed Artemis Award from the Council of European American Women.

Lisa Pierce, owner of Alpha and Omega Couriers Inc. in Springfield, IL was nominated for the prestigious Athena Award.

Janet King recently left Jackson Walker and opened her own law firm, King & Sommer, LLP.

Frank Woodruff, General Agent of South Texas Agency of MassMutual, announced that his agency has a new dba and will now be "doing business as" Sapien Financial Group.



In each newsletter I want to congratulate a few people for their outstanding achievements or special recognitions they have received. If you have been honored, published or have another item of interest, please let me know so I can share it with others.

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