



## Central Marketing Looks Forward to Bright Future

Central Marketing was started in 1986 by Edd Burleson and now 34 years later has evolved from very humble beginnings into a major equipment and service provider. Due to Edd's experience in the tyre retread industry, he had the vision of bringing automated equipment to North America and building a service company to support the equipment. Edd went to the Reifen Expo in Germany to search for companies to partner with him and help him achieve this vision. Cima Impianti and Matteuzzi srl were the first companies that joined this partnership, and since then many others have also joined.

This year, Central Marketing is celebrating 34 years of servicing and supplying the tyre industry in North America and Latin America. Located on 7½ acres in Colonial Heights, VA,

- Reconditioning of used equipment
  - Repair of damaged equipment
  - On-site service wherever needed
  - Same day parts shipment
  - Online and phone support
  - One-stop solution for new and used retreading equipment, parts and supplies.
  - A complete line of new tyre equipment for the Final Finish area
- "Central Marketing's success has come with the help of our associates, vendors, and customers. I know that it takes teamwork to succeed, and most of our associates have been with Central Marketing for many years, and the only real turnover is due to people retiring. Lynn Bishop, our General Manager, has been with us 26 years, and we have a technician that has been with us for 30 years. The same is true for our partner suppliers, as we have been

our long-time partners are: Cima Impianti-Pistoia, Italy., Matteuzzi srl-Bologna, Italy., M.I.G. srl- Rome, Italy., SDS Systemtechnik-Calw, Germany., SIT Brush-Bologna, Italy., IMS Fabrication-Salisbury, NC., and, VMI-AZ-Epe, the Netherlands."

"I feel that the future is very bright for Central Marketing, and we will continue to adjust to the market demands. Our goal is to keep investing to improve the equipment and our services. With the current market conditions and dealing with Covid-19, we are using technology to help with installations and equipment issues. When we need support from our vendors due to travel restrictions, we are now using TEAMS and video calls to show real-time what is



Edd Burleson, President, Central Marketing

happening. All the new equipment is connected to the internet, so this is going to change how things are done in the future. We also have pictures of all of the over 10,000 active part numbers in our inventory. This way, when a customer inquires, we can send a picture with the quote

lot of forecasting of what we feel the market will need and a very large on-hand inventory. We usually have enough equipment to fully supply 4 to 5 complete plants in our inventory," said, Edd Burleson. Eddie Burleson, Vice President-Central Marketing added; "One of our long-term plans is for our customers to have computerised access to our inventory and all technical data for their equipment at any time. When this is finalised, our goal is to allow the customer to log on and look at the drawings of their equipment and click on the part they need. The system would then show them our inventory with a picture of the part and the price. Then they can order the part and we will then ship the part(s) to them. We have about 60% of this done and hope to have it finished in the near future.

"We are also investing heavily in finding and training new associates, so the continuity of the company remains moving in the same direction. Our customers make us successful, and we must give them the best products and service that is possible to keep the strong relationships that we have developed."



Central Marketing's HQ in Colonial Heights, VA

which is 110 miles south of Washington, DC, Central Marketing operates in 70,000 square feet of buildings, consisting of offices, a warehouse, and manufacturing. The company specialises in the Final Finish area for new tyre manufacturing and the full turn-key capacity for the tyre retreading industry to cover all segments, including passenger, truck, OTR, and aircraft equipment. In addition to supplying new equipment, Central Marketing is one of the largest reconditioned equipment dealers in North America, offering everything needed for the retread industry. Central Marketing also carries a wide variety of parts and supplies including curing envelopes, curing tubes, bladders, and brushes for texturing the treads.

The range of services provided by Central Marketing includes:

- Technicians to visit customer facilities for equipment installations, equipment repairs, and training of employees

with all our major suppliers for well over 20 years. Central Marketing is an authorised agent for these suppliers, so we are just an extension of their company. This makes it possible to provide service and parts here in the North American and Latin American markets, working in the same time zones.

"We feel very fortunate to be aligned with a list of companies that are the market leaders in their field. All the suppliers aligned with us enable us to offer our customers one place to buy just about anything they may need. This is a big advantage to have all your needs serviced by one company. Some of

so there are no mistakes about what they are looking for:

"We invest our profits back into the company so we can grow the company for the future. One major goal of Central Marketing is to have all standardised equipment in stock so regardless of whether a customer needs a full retread plant or just a buffer or builder, we can ship to them in 2 to 3 days. This requires a





## What Effect has COVID-19 had on the Retreading Equipment and Supply Industry?

Most often we forget that the retreading industry is not only about the retreaders that crank out quality retreads for fleets all over the US and around the world. The retreaders are supported by a group of retread equipment & supply manufacturers and distributors that also do a tremendous job at making sure the retreaders have what they need when they need it to keep their plants running. In this article, we will hear from just a few of them to find out how they are coping with the “New Normal.”



**Edd Burleson: President - Central Marketing**

*How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your overall business?*

We have a staff of seven traveling technicians, and for several months they were unable to travel to customer locations to do service work. Customer and travel restrictions have started to lift, and our technicians are now traveling again, although we are still unable to travel out of the country or to have people from other countries travel here. We were fortunate to be able to use remote assistance during this non-traveling time period. At the beginning of this crisis, we had some customers asking if they could delay current orders and for extended payment terms.

*Were you forced to shut down? If so, for how long?*

We are considered an essential business, so we made some adjustments for worker safety, but we did not shut down. We are fortunate to have our business set up so that we are able to provide assistance to our customers via phone and remote assistance, so we were still able to ship parts and provide critical services to keep our customers running.

*Were you forced to furlough and/or lay off employees due to the COVID-19 pandemic?*

Fortunately, we did not have to lay off or furlough any employees. In fact, we added two new members to our staff, and we are still looking to add additional traveling technicians in the immediate future.

*Are retreaders investing in equipment during the pandemic and, if so, are they buying new or used?*

This appears to be contingent on where the retreaders are located and what the majority of their business is. For the first few months, most companies appeared to be very cautious with equipment purchases, but since the beginning of August, we had interest in new and used equipment, and we have sold a couple of buffers, builders and reconditioned chambers.

*Have you had requests for equipment from retreaders opening new plants?*

We have delivered two new plants, and we are working on another two in the next month.

*Has the demand for plant supplies and accessories during the pandemic been up or down and what are the most sought-after items?*

In the beginning, plant supplies were down, but they have steadily picked up and returned over the past few months. It seems that customers are placing more orders for next day air shipments of parts since they are stocking less inventory. Curing envelopes and brushes for the precured treads business has increased because customers were overstocking in the beginning, not knowing if the supply chain would be interrupted.

*How has COVID-19 affected the way you go to market?*

The effect that I see is that we need more technology in all our equipment so that we can be online with all our machines and not just the major pieces of equipment. Also, we have improved the parts



ordering to be able to send a picture of the part when a customer enquires to help eliminate mistakes. The elimination of dealer meetings and trade shows have also made in-person demonstrations of our equipment impossible so we have had to use video presentations. Covid-19 has caused more TEAMS and Zoom meetings rather than face-to-face meetings, and we are utilising more Powerpoint presentations and videos to communicate effectively with our customers. This correlates to the necessity of having state-of-the-art equipment that can be connected online with a competent technician to be able to remotely service the equipment instead of in person.

*When do you expect a rebound to happen?*

I think that it will be late 2021 until things start getting back to where they were pre-Covid as we will need a vaccine and have it available to everyone before things can return to normal.

*Have you experienced an interruption in your supply chain?*

In general, we have not had any major supply problems. We do have to order our expected requirements about 5 to 6 months in advance to ensure we have inventory when someone calls and needs equipment.

*What is your outlook for the balance of the year and into 2021?*

For the balance of 2020, I feel that the current level of business will hold to the same level as now. I expect 2021 to be down on 2020 as companies will be more conservative on new investments until there is a vaccine for COVID-19. We also feel that traveling technician service work will be in

high demand.

I feel very fortunate that we have been able to stay open and maintain our staff as there are many businesses that have had to reduce staff and close. I believe that this experience will make our industry more aware of how important it is to maintain a healthy financial balance sheet to help get through times like this.



**Clyde M. Church: President & CEO - ATEC, Inc.**

*How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your overall business? The COVID-19 pandemic impact has affected ATEC's business much the same as all retreaders and equipment suppliers.*

*Were you forced to shut down and/or lay off employees due to the COVID-19 pandemic?*

We had to adapt as the virus has been changing the rules of businesses everywhere. We have been lucky in that we did not have to shut down, nor did we have to lay off any employees. We did, however, modify employee hours to allow more time for family duties. Although we were able to continue our business, we recognise that this was not the case for all families and spouses and that our employees were still affected by work hours changing or having to work from home. This situation is ongoing.

*Are retreaders investing in equipment during the pandemic?*

During the stay-at-home order at