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Publisher
 Peter Charboneau
peter@otrgroup.ca

General Manager
 Ed Novoa
ed@otrgroup.ca

**Director of Operations
 & Editor-in-Chief**
 Cathryn Charboneau
cathryn@otrgroup.ca

Account Executive
 Luke Zentil
luke@otrgroup.ca

Account Executive
 J.C. Arseneault
jc@otrgroup.ca

Account Executive
 Earle Madden
earle@otrgroup.ca

**Graphic Design
 & Advertising**
 LKDesign
lennykuiper@gmail.com

Controller
 Estela Navarrete
estela@otrgroup.ca

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A Trump Presidency, Civil War and Canada's Involvement

Trump won on the campaign "Make America Great Again". The slogan then morphed into "...safe again." "...strong again." "one again." and even "...rich again.". This "America first" ideology is more of a revolutionary statement than a political campaign slogan. It sucker punches globalization; a collective ideology that has been entrenching itself for decades.

The United States is in a 'civil war' that has been growing for many decades. It is not played out using guns and bullets but with words, world views and ideological debates in digital/media circles. The electorate has swung from left to right, right to left and now back to the right. It has done so for so many cycles and its leaving most historians with vertigo. In this war there will be no shedding of blood. However, there will be plenty of what all war brings: uncertainty and upheaval. There will be economic turmoil, catastrophic change and disorder. Casualties will be things like: political correctness, mainstream media control, massive realignments in government power and economic flow to name just a few.

Though his presidency hasn't even started as of this writing, tsunami like change is (in my opinion) much more of a certainty than a guess. Trumps picks for his inner circle (cabinet) is like choosing the who's who of change agents. General "Mad Dog Mattis" for Secretary of Defense, Tom Price (vocal opponent of Obamacare) as Health Secretary and Scott Pruitt (anti-global warmer) as head of the EPA. This short list of powerful change agents continues to rise as Trump shakes the world with his first level of global "renegotiation" tactics.

For Canadians to economically survive the coming changes will take savvy business and negotiation abilities. These abilities must first be found at the federal political level. Can our Prime Minister go toe to toe with the Donald? Or will he be as Kevin O'Leary predicts; "Like Bambi verses Godzilla".

Just think, as Canada gears up for a Carbon Tax due to "global warming" Scott Pruitt heads to the EPA. I assume glider orders will be on the rise and "deleting pollution control devices" will be nodded and winked

at. The fuel consumption of US trucking fleets will immediately improve and the cost over mile will drop compared to Canada's.

The future competitive environment will be even more dependent on a practical streamlined government, free of cumbersome taxes and restrictions. Justin Trudeau's carbon tax heads in the wrong direction. It will make Canada, especially trucking, much less competitive.

Many may be concerned about Trump tearing up NAFTA... the truth is, it hardly even pays to talk about NAFTA any more. When carbon taxes are implemented, Canada's competitiveness will be well below the pace and behind the pack to successfully negotiate anything near a respectable free trade benefit. It's kind of hard to run a competitive marathon with a broken leg.

If Canada can't compete internationally, our GDP will eventually shrink as our products are left on the shipping docks. Trump's 'America first' will place Canada a distant second, third, fourth (or further). First to shrink will be oil sales, then auto parts and softwood lumber... other industries will soon or eventually follow. Our only defense will be a shrunken dollar. A low Loonie may save us short term but will eventually make purchasing items that are built outside Canada too expensive. President Trump will not have to entice business into (or back to) the US. They will be enticed (pushed) OUT

of our borders by a much better business environment to the south.

Can anyone imagine a high carbon tax on trucking similar to a fuel tax, even compounding it? In my second book I had color charts showing our Canadian fuel tax rate already twice as high as the US. Our country is already being strangled by taxes and over regulation. If we as a country don't focus on "Canada first" or "making Canada great again" we don't have to worry about global warming, our future will be cold.

About the Author:

Robert D. Scheper is a leading Accountant and Consultant to the Lease/Owner operator industry in Canada. His first book in the Making Your Miles Count series "taxes, taxes, taxes" was released in 2007. His firm exclusively serves Lease/Owner Operators across Canada. His second book "Choosing a Trucking company" is the most in-depth analysis of the operator industry available today. He has a Master degree (MBA) in financial management and has been serving the industry since he and his wife came off the road in 1993. His dedication, commitment and strong opinions can be read and heard in many articles and seminars.

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SPEAKING FROM EXPERIENCE

Ray J. Haight



Welcome to 2017

The calendar is a wonderful thing; a calendar year allows us to reflect on the past twelve month's triumphs and failures. If we choose to, each January we can start anew. We can and should reflect on our successes and failures in both our business and personal lives. I'm not just speaking of the old standby New Year's resolutions such as plans to lose weight and quit smoking; I'm speaking about a formal approach to being successful in every area of your life that is important to you. I have had experiences at both ends of the spectrum in my career in the trucking industry. I've seen the world from the eyes of a small fleet of three trucks and I have also held responsibility for 450 people.

When I reflect on the losses and wins in my career there are many similarities, whether it's one truck or 300 power units. An organized company that works their Mission Statement will plot a course over a 12-month plan that they think will achieve success. Fleet size, gross sales, fuel cost, equipment operating cost, revenue per mile and labor costs are just a few of the factors that this plan should take into consideration. A large company will set its budget by having senior managers from each department formulate a budget for their respective area. From there, they will develop both a business plan and a budget for the next 12 months. It's a formal process that repeats itself year over year and this also becomes the company's Vision Plan as they decide what

they want to happen three or five years down the road. This model is repeated in many successful companies so why should an individual Owner Operator be any different?

I have seen a lack of planning limit many different types of people. I have seen lazy people who failed and wondered why their future wasn't handed to them. I have also seen folks work their butts off with determination until they burned themselves out and still didn't get anywhere. As an Owner Operator you run a small business with substantial assets and therefore, you need to plan both your long and short-term success. Begin by evaluating your bench strength; how did your support team do for you in the past 12 months? How did your mechanical support team perform? Were repairs done effectively the first time? Were they of help when you had an issue on the road and you were required to deal with other repair facilities? Did they ensure you recovered all of the warranty dollars available to you? If you had an issue with a repair they made did they correct the problem co-operatively or did they play the blame game? What was your total down time?

How did your financial advisor/bookkeeper do for you? Were all of your GST returns filed accurately and on time? Were you advised on the best approach to dealing with your taxes? Have you received advice about planning for your retirement? Do you have an accurate picture of how you stand financially (this can take the form

of a profit and loss statement)? Were they there for you when you needed them?

The questions don't end there. How did your carrier do in providing the revenue per mile and the necessary miles needed for you to succeed? Are their statements easy to read and accurate? Are they interested and receptive if you approach them and suggest that you have a problem? Is their fuel surcharge fair? Are you treated fairly and honestly by the whole infrastructure of the company?

As the President, CEO and Chief Bottle washer of your small trucking enterprise rank yourself on the following:

1. Controlling all variable expenses including fuel and maintenance.
2. Contribution to maximizing gross revenue
3. Achievement of your yearly budget
4. Contribution to your long-term goals (i.e. retirement)
5. Management of your support teams (i.e. repairs or financial advisor)
6. Carrier revenue stream
7. Innovation. (Yes, innovation... what did you do last year to ensure that you were aware of new opportunities to be more successful? Did you lower your operating cost or increase your revenue?)

Decide what your team's KPI's (Key Performance Indicators) are and then rank them from 1-10 on their performance over the past year. If you have a weakness in your team, how did you deal with it? Perhaps you didn't clearly explain what your expectation is of them. A good leader will never think people know what you want of them; it is up to you to

explain your expectations. People don't know what they don't know, so spell it out for them. If you are convinced that you're not getting what you need from your teams to be successful then go find what you need. A good practice is to write a list of each critical element required of each member of your team. Then, rate each individual on a scale from one to ten and deal with each failing grade accordingly. **If you don't deal with any of the failing grades, look in the mirror, for you have found the enemy and it is you!**

What have you done to ensure that you have done the best for you and yours? This is the hard question folks as it is the one that will have the most impact on your future. Last, but certainly not least, I ask that you look at the way you treat your family support system. How you rank yourself on this one is paramount! Without them, why are any of us beating our heads against the wall trying to make it? I've been through the good, bad and the ugly times and I have learned that regretting the past is a waste of spirit. In other words, each new day is a new opportunity. I've learned never to take those I love for granted; they need to know how much I need and appreciate them. Here's wishing you a healthy, happy and successful 2017. All the best.

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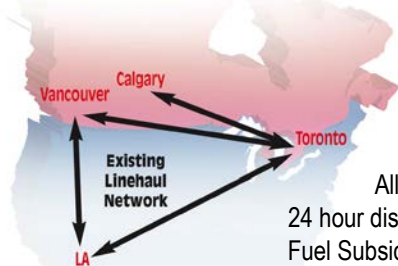
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TFX International: The Family Car Movers

If you are the type of person who likes cars then you will definitely love the history of TFX. The team at TFX are true car people and since 1987 Wally Horodnyk has been striving to continuously improve both the driver and the customer experience. This has all boiled down to one thing: the right equipment.

It all began years ago when Wally was a co-partner in an Ontario trucking company. One day a member of their sales team asked if they could move a car from Flint Michigan to the GTA for the very impressive price of \$1,700.00 USD. Since the going rate at the time for the average load was \$300.00, Wally jumped at the chance and using a Ford truck and trailer, they loaded the car, placing pads all over the vehicle to keep it protected. When he delivered the car, the fellow who received it asked why all the pads? Wally explained that it was to make sure that the car stayed scratch free and protected. The guy laughed and said that the car

was brought over to Canada to be crash tested and that in the next 20 minutes or so, the car would be totalled. Wally was invited to stay for the crash test of the very car he had painstakingly covered with padding and protected!

When Wally came back he asked his salesmen if he could get more car hauling deals and that is how he got into the car hauling business. Before long they had a business with over 400 cars to move so they began to purchase the necessary equipment needed to get the job done. Being a car enthusiast himself, Wally enjoyed building up this side of the company. A few years later, Wally and his wife Christine set up TFX International after they both realized that moving cars exclusively would probably result in a greater opportunity and a higher upside. Wally has always had a love of cars so he understands how important it is to move high value cars safely and without incurring any damage.

TFX prides itself in having top equipment to ensure complete driver and customer satisfaction. Their fleet consists of 26 Volvo trucks that get changed out every three years. Each of their custom ordered trailers are valued at around \$300,000 and once they receive them, the trailers undergo even further modifications in the TFX fabrication shop. The evolution of their car hauling trailers has come a long way and all of their Drivers have the correct equipment and training to load and unload trailers efficiently. A major objective of the modified equipment is to eliminate any damage to the undercarriage of the cars they move so that even the lowest of sports cars are not scrapped in any way. This is critical when your top client list includes Ferrari, Bentley, Rolls Royce, McLaren and Maserati among others. The Drivers must get accustomed to loading cars that sit very close to the ground. Hydraulic pumps and rams adjust the car's height over the trailer wheels to optimize the number of cars a trailer can hold while at the same time, keeping the vehicles safe. In addition, all trailers are like mini vaults as they are installed with a remote mobile phone app controlling the locks of the trailer so that even the driver can't access it in certain situations. It is these types of sophisticated technologies and the trailer engineering that have attracted the highest level of luxury auto makers to choose TFX to deliver their new and used cars throughout the Canadian dealer network.

It truly is a family owned and run business with Wally as VP of Operations and Christine as the CFO. Also involved is their daughter Caitlin (City Dispatch), daughter in law Annie (Adams wife) in Human Resources and nephew Andy (Wally's brother's son) who is warehouse supervisor. Also working with the company for many years is Wally's son Adam who has recently become President of the company.



Wally (left) and Adam (right) Horodnyk

Adam began with the company at a very early age and at age 21 he moved from the shipping department into the office and began to learn various job positions before finally taking over sales and marketing for the company. Over the years he has learned every aspect of the trailer business and running the shop and has learned the business from the ground up. Adam states; "The first thing everyone learns to do when they get hired here is to load a vehicle properly. It typically takes a full year to learn this specialized skill." Wally continues; "These cars are very valuable so we always use two people when loading, one inside the car and one outside as a spotter."

The company is focused on building the business in key segments. Their OEM deliveries to various dealership networks throughout Canada have grown quickly and now account for approximately 30% of the business. Their snow birds segment (people who hire TFX to have their cars shipped from their Canadian home to their warmer residences like Florida State) now also account for approximately 30%. The rest is made up of personal or unique vehicle hauls like vintage cars for car shows or auctions, celebrities' cars and cars used for motion pictures.

The future looks bright for TFX with Adam focused on key growth areas while Wally expands their fleet, adding about 3 drivers and 3 truck/trailers per year. The focus still remains on providing drivers with the right equipment and satisfying their customer's needs. A true family owned and operated company now set for further growth to come.

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Chris Harris



2017 – A Brand New Year!

Often at the end of one year and the beginning of another, I find myself looking at the year ahead to the year that is expected. What will happen in the year 2017 for the trucking industry? Much of it will affect truck drivers! The big one of course, is the USA ELD Mandate.

At the time that I am writing this article, it does look like the ELD law will come into effect in December, 2017 for most commercial trucking companies. Yes, there are still some legal challenges that are out there and threaten the start date. But from everything that I have read, it appears that the challenges will not succeed and that the mandate will go ahead as planned. So plan on December 2017 - at least this is my understanding at the time of this writing. There is not much that you the truck driver will be able to do about this new compliance rule. Love it or hate it, it looks like it will come into force in 2017.

Canada is also expected to join the ELD band wagon. It is believed that each province will issue ELD laws pertaining to them. These new laws will effectively cover intra and inter-provincial trucking drivers. In other words, it is likely that all drivers that currently complete paper logbooks will need to move to electronic logging devices. For the Canada only truck driver, this means that they will have about two more years before the Canadian version of any ELD mandate takes effect. The rules

or proposed new laws should be published this year. In most cases in Canada, after the publication, it takes about two years to implement the new directive.

2017 will not just be about the ELD. For those who are not truck drivers yet, in Ontario there will be new legislation called MELT (Minimum Entry Level Training) for those people that want to obtain an AZ licence. In the USA a similar law takes effect called ELDT (Entry Level Driver Training). The ELDT rule is more comprehensive in that it covers training for tractor trailers, straight truck, and even school bus drivers. I hope that we here in Canada will follow suit. I believe that we need entry level training for all commercial drivers.

What else is happening for 2017? We have new Commercial Driver's License Drug and Alcohol clearinghouse legislation. The clearinghouse will be an electronic database containing records of violations of drug and alcohol prohibitions in subpart B of part 382. Such violations will include positive drug or alcohol test results, refusals and other drug and alcohol violations for drivers who are required to have a commercial driver's license (CDL). When a driver completes the return-to-duty process, this information will also be recorded in the clearinghouse. And yes, Canadians must be included as well as Mexicans.

FSMA is coming! What is it? The Food Safety Modernization Act. The FSMA will significantly affect the trucking industry. This Act may cover food products including raw ingredients. The Government wants to know everything about who, when and how the food gets from the field to the table of consumers and how it was transported. Who was in control of the process and who carried the food? The focus of the new law is to build in prevention throughout the process. It is to protect us from food-borne illnesses such as Salmonella, E-coli or Listeria. This code was last updated in 1938. It is about time that we updated our processes so that we reduce the likelihood of illness.

And lastly, we will continue to see vehicles that incorporate new features, many of which are for

safety. These functions may include adaptive cruise control, collision avoidance, new fuel types and self-driving trucks.

2017 looks very exciting but it will bring many changes for all drivers. I know that I sometimes have a difficult time adapting to change but we all need to learn to welcome it.

Have a safe day.

Chris Harris

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