

AAPEX 2019

WHAT DRIVES YOU



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Las Vegas, NV | Sands Expo
AAPEXSHOW.COM

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TOM SEBOLDT

Vice President of Merchandise

O'Reilly Auto Parts, Springfield, Missouri

What do you and your company do? I am responsible for the Product management team that oversees all the product on the front sales floor, as well as light application categories of Batteries, Lighting, Wipers and Filters. O'Reilly Auto Parts is the third largest specialty auto retailer in the United States with 5,097 stores in 47 states. We sell to retail walk in customers, professional installers that service the DIFM market, and jobbers.

How long have you been in your position, business? 31.5 years.

How many employees are at your business? 75,000 employees.

What are the main challenges to running your business and doing your job? We try to stay ahead of the competition. It's very challenging whether it's traditional competition or ecommerce. We always ensure that we are competitive in all of our channels. Another challenge is keeping up with regulatory issues that products face, which can vary by state, county, etc. There's a lot of regulatory stuff now that we didn't have to worry about 15 years ago.

How long have you been coming to AAPEX? 25 years.

What do you like about AAPEX? AAPEX provides the opportunity to see everything that the automotive aftermarket offers in one contained space and one contained week. We always seem to find new products and the AAPEXedu sessions are really good.

What are you looking forward to this year at AAPEX? I look forward to seeing the newer initiatives, such as training on the show floor. I also look forward to networking with people that I don't see that often and touching base with them. Some people we only get to see once a year.

What would you tell someone about AAPEX who has never been? I would tell them they are going to be overwhelmed at first, but that's OK. I would encourage them to hook up with a veteran attendee who could show them the ins and outs of the show. If that's not possible, they should use the AAPEX mobile app to navigate the show floor. Plus, the AAPEX signage onsite is really clear and helpful.

What was your first car? 1968 Ford F100, 3-speed on the column.

Favorite car part? On newer vehicles, I like the back up cameras.