

# ATI Shoptalk



Issue 2

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## Upcoming Courses:

### Shop Owners

March 25-27  
April 1-3  
April 15-17  
April 22-24

### Service Managers

March 23-24  
April 6-7  
April 20-21

### Advanced Shop Owners

March 19-20

### Advanced Service Managers

April 27-29

### Alumni Class

March 30-31

### Master Mind Group

April 30



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## New Alumni Classes

By Chris Frederick



### Winning in a Bad Economy

Last month at the annual Superconference in Mexico, our trainers and coaches announced 4 new programs for ATI Alumni Members. These courses are designed to increase sales, profits, car count & give Alumni members more free time. While some of the content may be appropriate for active Re-Engineering clients, the courses are designed as advanced classes once implementation & participation in our current curriculum is complete. These new programs will be offered quarterly in 2009 by reservation since some of the class sizes are limited to make them more effective.

### Alumni Discussion Groups

Learning through interaction is almost as good as teaching it. At ATI, we realize a lot of you would like to sit in an open U-shaped format and discuss one topic at a time that is really important to you. Sometimes, you can learn more from other shop owners than you can from us because they may be in the same predicament. This is different than Mastermind, which is a 20 member group that you have to apply for and be accepted into that must meet three times a year.

The Alumni Discussion Group is an open forum you can come to when the topic intrigues you and you have the time to invest. The topics for 2009 will include expenses, marketing and tires. We will have our most knowledgeable coaches and trainers on each subject attend the class to offer assistance to the challenges and opportunities you may have at that point in time.



There is nothing like having a private coach to talk to and 20 shop owners working on the same topic at the same time.

### Advanced Financial Modeling

In 2008, Bryan Stasch began an MBA program at the University of Maryland for entrepreneurs that are already in the game. In my CEO Vistage group, I was taught some new financial modeling by some of the most successful CEO's in the business. The goal of this course is to take 2 years of KPI portal information and create a new strategic plan designed to give you your win number in financial security. We will analyze your challenges, trends and opportunities for long term

success. We will share with you some new ATI Power Tools integrated into your portal to make predictions on your future. One of these concepts is called Trailing Twelve Month Charts and graphs. An example of trailing twelve's would be a graph of your GP for the past 24 months which would tell us what you have been capable of over the journey of Re-Engineering. Looking at your historical performance will help us build a new 5 year strategic plan that is realistic and tells us what we must continue to work on together. In addition, we have a new instructor, Dan the man, who will work with you on your succession, retirement and estate planning. This is the ultimate course for those of you who want long term financial security & free time.

### Advanced Marketing and Advertising

As you are aware, when you join Re-Engineering, we have a lot of proven retention and acquisition strategies ready to go for you to save time implementing when you are focused on building back your cash reserves. Many Alumni members have requested an advanced course where you have more of a hand custom designing your own marketing plan. We are going to teach the 4 components of effective marketing & the 5 pillars of true value. This course is designed to create an effective

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message through your own branding to increase car count. Then, we will create a compelling value proposition to maximize advertising impact. Our goal is to optimize car count through advanced tracking techniques as well.

### Making Your Business Run Without You

Typically by the end of Re-Engineering, most owners have hired a second-in-command and begun to work more on the business. This course is designed to help you grow your second-in-command so the business runs as well without you as it did with you. This doesn't mean you can completely walk away but we want to build your team to respond to the second in command's leadership. In order to accomplish this, we will work on how to create consistency and lasting positive change. We will also teach you the keys to effective company meetings, advanced management techniques and how to protect your employee investment.

All of these courses are designed to keep you from slipping back where you were when we met you and take you to an even higher level. Having several coaches mentor me through my long term plans has been the secret to my success in growing ATI. You will never get good at the things you are bad at or not interested in, so by having someone help you with those weaknesses is the difference I see in great leaders.

Remember, when you stop learning, you stop growing. When you stop growing so do your people. When your people stop growing, so does your business. Need I keep going?



# What Makes Superconference So Great?

By Mitch Schneider and Jay Siff



Mitch Schneider

My head hurts...and, no wonder! I haven't slept a full night since returning home late Saturday night from Cancun and Superconference 2009. It's their fault: those miserable ATI people! And, they show no remorse. Can you believe that? They put together just about the best conference I have ever been to - and, I've been to more than my share - both, as a presenter and as a participant: and, they're likely to do it again!

What makes a Superconference so super? You can start with the attendees. As a presenter, it is always a joy to have articulate, intelligent, knowledgeable people in the room. They keep you focused and challenge you to bring your best to the conference. I had the privilege of facilitating three roundtables, and all three were terrific. Was that the reason for my head pounding? No! The headache was caused, at least in part, by the frustration I experienced knowing that while I was busy facilitating my three round tables, there were half-a-dozen more going on that I would have given anything to attend!

What about the seminars? Do the seminars add Super to the term Superconference? They do if the presenters and the presentations are world class! Each was excellent in its own way, but Bryan Dodge's presentation has been playing on a continuous loop in my head since he said "thank you" and walked off the stage! Sometimes things just come together, and your readiness to listen, the message and the messenger create a magical

moment that continues to resonate long after the presentation is done. How about the location? A Westin resort... on the Mexican Riviera...in Cancun: enough said! In the end, however, it is the company and the care that makes for a special experience. It is meticulous attention to every detail. It is hundreds of hours of work and double that in worry that ensures perfection and it all came together in Mexico. It is the energy and effort that the people of ATI: Chris, Richard, the two Karen's, Bryan, every one of the coaches, Reed, each of the facilitators and all of the presenters... It is the enthusiasm everyone brings to the event that makes a Superconference super and it will all happen again next year! I'll be there, even if it makes my head hurt! What about you? *Mitch Schneider is the Director of the Car Care Professionals Network "Mitch's World."*



Jay Siff

Having just returned from the '09 Superconference in Cancun, I must say how impressed I was once again. Last year was the first time my wife Terry and I attended the event. In 2008 we were delighted with the quality of the educational opportunities and the great spirit of the group.

I've learned from experience that I'm often impressed the first time I do something. It's usually on my repeat that I truly determine the real value. As vendors, most people would assume Terry & I were there just to sell—but that's not the case. We use events like this to help further our industry knowledge

and expertise. We attended all group sessions, plus 3 great round table discussions. The speakers and their presentations were very educational. Well, I was dazzled once again!

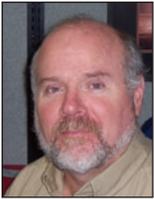
We attend 8-10 Superconference-like events every year and we've done so for over 15 years. This adds up to lots of opportunities to interact with experts and to learn. But never have I been with such an outstanding group of automotive experts as at an ATI Superconference. In addition, the magnificent environment is conducive to learning. Getting away and being in a warm, beautiful place opens my mind. I can think outside the box... and as a result I'm more receptive to learning. While those selfish reasons are enough to bring me back again and again, the thing that may have impressed me the most, is the sense of family that happens at the Superconference.

The ATI staff, from Chubby, to Richard, to the Karen's - plus all of the excellent coaches - work harder to deliver real value than any organization I've ever seen... plus they sure make it fun. And the attendees make it even better. Not only are they the best of the best shops, but their willingness to work together is amazing. They gladly share ideas, tricks, tips, techniques, and even criticism. The beach Olympics may have demonstrated it best. The teams fought as hard as they could to win, but all in the spirit of fun & friendship. It was truly a magical event! *Jay Siff is Founder and CEO of Moving Targets.*

**ATTENTION SHOP OWNERS AND MANAGERS:**  
If you have something you would like to share,  
e-mail your coach or ATI at  
office@autotraining.net.

# Superconference 2009; Graduate School In The Sun

By Brian Canning



In the midst of what is being described by many as the greatest economic challenge since the Great Depression,

nearly 200 people representing 90 shops showed up at the Westin Resort and Spa in Cancun Mexico to participate in what turned out to be the most successful event ever put on by ATI. A great agenda and tremendous speakers were complemented by a great group of clients that made this event a huge success. As dazzling and as beautiful as the facilities were, it was a great agenda; impressive content and

group of clients focused on and determined to get to that next level that made it all work. Under the new program format of one full and two half days, I suspect there was adequate time to enjoy the facilities, but as the door closed each morning, attention and attendance was certainly there. After **Richard Menneg** opened the event, Chubby gave his unique perspective on where we are as an industry and his thought on where we were going; the attendees were treated to a succession of notable speakers that made the event more memorable.

**Sam Memmolo**, noted industry TV personality, discussed how best to compete with the dealers in this challenging economy and ways that the independents can benefit from the huge issues facing the dealers. He emphasized that there are areas where the

dealers retain a competitive advantage, such as "factory approved" or "OE", but also noted the many areas favorable to the independent.

**Bryan Dodge**, who might best be described as a motivational speaker, wowed the crowd with a charisma and magnetism that blew the audience away and garnered a lengthy standing ovation as he discussed personal development, goal setting and why you



have to take ownership in leadership in his presentation on "*How To Build A Better You*".

**Lauren Fix**, another industry TV personality, showed that despite her gender, she really is a car guy. In discussing how to market and sell to women in our repair shops, this ASE certified industry expert showed a deep understanding of what women look for in a repair shop and discussed the do's and don'ts of dealing with women at our counters. Lauren was particularly impressive in answering audience questions. Though a highly visible industry celebrity, she obviously knows which end of the impact gun is which.

**Jay Geier**, in discussing "The Blind Spot in Your Business" embarrassed many in the crowd as he played recorded efforts from the counters of those attending the conference and graphically demonstrated how important the phone remains as

a marketing tool and how poorly most of us are making use of it. It was particularly effective with his having recorded every shop in attendance and allowing all of us to hear what is going on behind our counters on our phones every day.

**Barry Shammis**, another speaker of broad reputation, discussed "*How To Find, Recruit and Hire Winning Employees*" & was unique in his description of how we typically miss the

boat in these efforts and drove home the point that rather than hiring to fill a position we need to be hiring to fill an existing business need. In this, it is important to always be looking at our staffing model and to always be looking

at ways and for opportunities to update or modify this model to serve the existing business environment. In this he revealed a formula that would go a long way toward assuring our ability to hire and retain the quality employees we need.

An important highlight in this event was a marketing panel made up of **Mark Hockridge** of Customer Link, **Jay Siff** of Moving Targets and **George Zabrecky** of NWZ WORX. Obviously representing different ends of the advertising and marketing spectrum, these three took on marketing trends in this economy. With every opportunity for these tough competitors to clash, they were each able to present their views and observations to an audience hungry for an edge and new direction in this ever important area.

As always, we had round tables that included many of

the guest speakers as well as the coaches who were in attendance. Each client had the opportunity to attend three of the thirty sessions offered. These sessions are particularly important because they give our clients the opportunity to sit with and interact with the presenters and other clients and get immediate feedback. As always, these round tables were very well attended.

Though all clients are encouraged to attend the Super Conference, this event is about our Mastermind & Alumni clients. It was very encouraging to see so many of these long term, accomplished clients who honor us with their participation in this event every year. These clients represent a large and growing group within the ATI family. Their voices were heard loud and clear in how we structured the event this year; particularly in the content & in the Master Mind group taking center stage to discuss their own perspective on what success will look like in 2009. We are blessed with a large group of clients who have committed themselves to success & we gather each year to celebrate this continued partnership. The Super Conference is really about our Alumni clients.

As for myself, Super Conference 2009 was quite simply the best industry event I have ever been to. Having it in a great resort with a great agenda, packed with notable industry speakers does not assure a great event. All of this combined with an incredible collection of motivated, happy, successful clients went a long way toward bringing it all together for me. This Super Conference has me confidently looking for new heights and opportunities this year. I can't wait 'til 2010!



## Sam's Corner: Catching or Fishing In Mexico?

By Chris Frederick

I had the opportunity to fish in Mexico at the Superconference with Judi and Dana Haglin along with Stephanie and Mark Milstead. Judi saw my invitation and responded because she didn't want me to fish alone, however, she didn't want a repeat of fishing in Cabo at our past Super conference. I explained to her that in the fishing business, there is catching and there is fishing. Close to Cancun, is the island of Isla Mujeres which hosts a few American boats that go catching everyday in January

& February. As a matter of fact, 15-25 sailfish a day, this would certainly qualify for a catching event. The day we were there, it was blowing and the fishing was off a bit but we did manage to catch 8 sailfish trolling for only about 5 hours. You see the transportation didn't pick us up to take us to the ferry to get over to Isla so our savior, Karen Dee, set out with us in a mini van to find the ferry. Not many English speaking folks up at 5:30 in the morning, so by the time we reached the boat, it was 8:00am. Once on board "The

Smoker", life was great again and except the rougher than heck water, it was a beautiful day. Since we had two fish on at once on most hook-ups, the Captain had to back down on the fish which surprised Judi and I when a wall of water came roaring over the stern and smacked us on the nose. Most of us got a second shower that morning but it took our minds off the rough seas. Everyone caught a sailfish and some of us more than one. Pictured is Mark Milstead with his sailfish, which was very wild and hard



to handle. These sailfish are very feisty like White marlin with tons of jumping and ripping out hundreds of yards of line. At 2pm, we were ready to head back for the Superconference reception and celebrate our day of catching, not fishing. Thanks to the Milsteads and Haglins for the memories.

## Seven At the Top, *Congratulations To All!*

### This Month's Winners are:

#### Garry and Theresa Gerossie

Garry's Service Center  
323 S. Main Street  
Concord, NH 03301

#### Bob and Michelle Horcher

Horcher's Service Center  
415N Milwaukee Avenue  
Wheeling, IL 60090

#### Gary Sapp

Gary Sapp's Automotive  
Service Center  
322 Beverly Parkway  
Pensacola, FL 32505

#### Mike Brown

Iowa City Tire & Service  
410 Kirkwood Avenue  
Iowa City, IA 52240

#### Jeremy Harris

DMH Automotive Inc.  
909 East Pearce Blvd  
Wentzville, MO 63385

#### Craig Courtney

C&M Auto  
16169 Caputo  
Morgan Hill, CA 95037

#### Nathan Merrill/Glen Hayward

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