

TIPS TO CONNECT WITH INTERNATIONAL BUYERS AT THE 2015 SEMA SHOW

By Linda Spencer



■ Top automotive specialty-equipment buyers from Russia, the Middle East, Australia and China will speak about the opportunities and challenges U.S. manufacturers face in doing business in their home markets.

Forums on Top Emerging Markets

Top automotive specialty-equipment buyers from Russia, the Middle East, Australia and China will speak about the opportunities and challenges U.S. manufacturers face in doing business in their home markets at roundtable discussions on Monday, November 2, in Upper North Hall, Room N259.

Middle East

- **Monday, November 2, 2015; 11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.; Upper North Hall, Room N259**

Learn how to cash in on this lucrative region. The United Arab Emirates and surrounding countries provide some of the best opportunities for U.S. specialty-parts manufacturers. Off-roading, classic-car collecting and motorsports are all growing in popularity. Attendees will also learn about the details of the fifth one-on-one matchmaking program to be held in Abu Dhabi on March 29–April 2, 2016.

Australia

- **Monday, November 2, 2015; 12:00–1:00 p.m.; Upper North Hall, Room N259**

Meet for lunch and conversation with top buyers from Down Under. Hear about the opportunities in this country of pickup and SUV customizing fanatics and diehard

More than 25% of all buyers expected at the 2015 SEMA Show will come from more than 132 nations outside the United States. Exhibitors should create an action plan to attract and service international buyers visiting their booths. Make make plans to:

- Arrange for your international sales and marketing staff to be on hand to greet overseas buyers.
- Request a “We Export” sign. Complimentary “We Export” signs are available to exhibitors for display in their booths. Let international buyers know that you are interested in doing business with them with this multilingual sign. Don’t know where to get one? Contact lindas@sema.org.
- Have sample of products with international applications in your booth.
- Attend the SEMA International Happy Hour and International Roundtables as an easy way to meet global buyers as well as U.S. companies doing business abroad.
- Don’t forget signage for any product applications that would fit vehicles that may not be found in the United States. For example, if you created product for the vehicles made available by a joint program between SEMA and the U.S. Department of Commerce, such as the Toyota HiLux, Ford Ranger T6, Mitsubishi L200 or UAZ Hunter—all of which are popularly customized around the world but not sold in the United States—be sure to let visitors to your booth know.

hot-rod enthusiasts. In particular, excitement is building for the all-new Ford Mustang (in righthand drive) landing on Australia's shores in December. Talk with distributors and retailers eager to carry product to meet the groundswell of enthusiasm, with more than 20,000 "letters of interest" submitted by consumers drawn to the all-new performance vehicle. Explore the challenges as well: All vehicles in the country are righthand drive, and many vehicles popularly customized in Australia are not sold in the United States.

Russia

- **Monday, November 2, 2015; 1:00 p.m.–2:00 p.m.; Upper North Hall, Room N259**

Russia was on track to become the largest vehicle market in Europe before its vehicle market—and economy—were derailed by a devalued currency and sanctions. A gradual reduction in bank interest rates and a ruble gaining in value are expected to bring about some modest improvements in the vehicle market in the short term. Come learn how to take advantage of this opportunity to build brand recognition, product loyalty and work toward mid- and longer-term goals.

While immediate business gains will make immediate sales more difficult, begin to develop your brand now by meeting with key Russian buyers and those from nearby countries and begin your entry or expansion into this market, which includes a large number of U.S.-made vehicles and is expected to become Europe's largest passenger-vehicle market once this market recovers.

Interesting facts about the Russian automotive market:

About 48,000 U.S.-made vehicles were imported into Russia in 2013, according to a U.S. Department of Commerce report. In addition to U.S.-made vehicles exported to Russia, Ford's 50/50 joint venture in 2013 produced the millionth Russian-built, Ford-badged vehicle. In addition, popularly customized vehicles, such as the Jeep Wrangler, are also now officially sold in Russia.

China

- **Monday, November 2, 2015; 3:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.; Upper North Hall, Room N259**



■ The annual International Happy Hour is the largest annual international specialty-equipment trade gathering.

Chinese distributors and SEMA members already successful in the region provide insider tips. Learn the latest trends, applications and perceptions of U.S. brands in the Chinese market. This will be a great opportunity to meet with press and distributors of specialty products in this market of 1.3 billion people in an informal, practical session that will assist attendees in deciding if this market is a good fit for their products.

International Happy Hour

- **Wednesday, November 4, 2015; 5:00 p.m.–6:30 p.m.; Upper North Hall, Room N255**

Pre-registration required but complimentary. Visit www.sema.org/international to register.

The 2015 International Happy Hour is the largest annual international specialty-equipment trade gathering. Network with international buyers, distributors and media right in the Las Vegas Convention Center at the close of the day's SEMA Show. More than 1,000 companies are expected at the 12th edition of the event.

Global Media Awards

Get your hottest new products in front of buyers and the media by participating in the New Products Showcase. The annual Global Media Awards will once again be selected by a group of 35 top automotive journalists from more than 20 countries. Each will name 10 products from the New Products Showcase that he or she thinks will most appeal to consumers in their home markets. Winning companies will be recognized at the International Happy Hour, receiving Global Media Awards that signify the global appeal of their products and their companies.

Center for International Commerce

The Center for International Commerce will be located in the Las Vegas Convention Center, Room N255. The CIC room offers complimentary private meeting space and interpreters to facilitate meetings between exhibitors and international buyers. On hand will be a team of interpreters to assist in bilingual communication in key languages, such as German, French, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese and Portuguese. 🌐