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CITGO's Mark Betner has influenced the heavy duty lubricants industry

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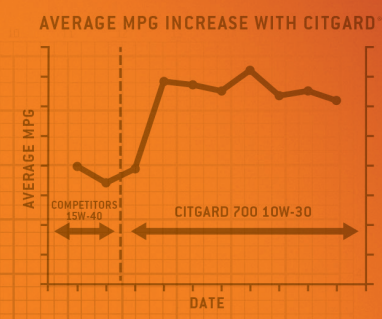

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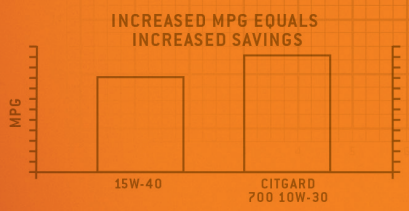



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CITGO LUBRICANTS



To Our Partners in the Trucking Community,

When you put your heart and soul into this industry, you witness a lot. From annual changes in regulations and specifications, to new technologies and an ever-changing future. Through all of this, you've remained committed to the industry that powers us every day, and we are grateful for your dedication.

At times in our industry, star players emerge. One such individual who comes immediately to mind is heavy duty sales manager Mark Betner. Mark's loyalty, heart and endless contributions to CITGO and the industry over the years have made him somewhat of a celebrity in the heavy-duty world. Mark has created quite a legacy at CITGO and in the industry overall, but perhaps his greatest contribution has been opening the door to allow us to help you. After 30 years of exemplary service, Mark is eyeing a well-earned retirement. For now, however, we are fortunate that he continues inspiring us with his passion for the heavy duty business. He's a definite asset to co-workers & customers alike.

If it's been some time since you've reviewed CITGO heavy duty products, we ask that you consider the value associated with our brand. We continue to support the heavy duty industry with products made here in the United States, offering quality, high-end materials at competitive price points.

CITGO, heavy duty products power some of the largest fleets in the country – helping them by limiting downtime, offering improved fuel economy, and saving them money. When you consider our distribution capabilities and award-winning safety records, it becomes clear why choosing to do business with CITGO is so advantageous.

As a new year begins, we look forward to partnering with you and doing all that we can to keep your fleet running smoothly. Together let's make 2019 a year for the industry record books.

Brian Paulson,
General Manager, CITGO Lubricants

LASTING IMPRESSIONS OF A LUBE INDUSTRY LEGEND

INNOVATOR. EDUCATOR. ADVOCATE.

For more than 30 years, CITGO's Mark Betner has been a masterful innovator, educator and advocate for the heavy duty lubricants industry. As he begins to wind down an illustrious career, the influence he has had on both colleagues and customers will carry.

By Gregg Wartgow, contributing editor

Whether you're speaking with CITGO employees, distributors or customers, the same things are repeatedly said about Mark Betner. He is genuine. He is funny. He is passionate. And when it comes to topics such as engines, lubricants and fleet operations, Mark Betner knows his stuff.

Betner is heavy duty lubricants manager for CITGO Petroleum, a company he has worked for since 1989. His tenure in the lubricants industry goes back even further. Prior to joining CITGO, Mark worked for an independent lubricant company specializing in heavy equipment. Betner's love of engines, trucks, equipment and people made him well-suited to the position, as did his education in chemistry. He even holds a certification from the Society of Tribologists and Lubrication Engineers. Mark has also been an active member of the Technology & Maintenance Council (TMC) for many years.

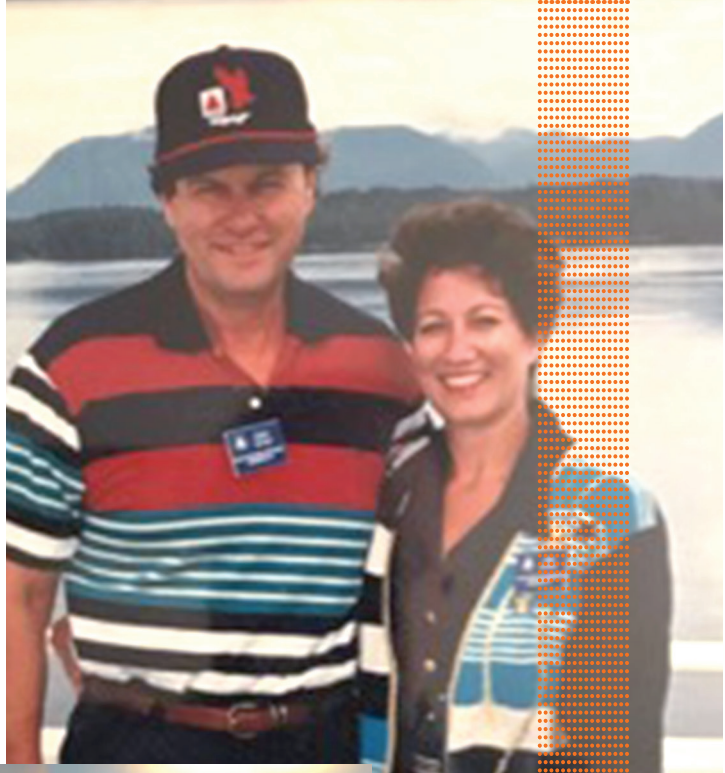
Through his work for CITGO and involvement with TMC, Betner has come to know a countless number of fleet owners, drivers and technicians. Many have come to respect his depth of knowledge, not to mention his personality. Many have become loyal customers, and in some cases, good friends.

Betner has helped lead a long list of game-changing product innovations throughout his time at CITGO. He became known as an evangelist for premium-quality, lower-viscosity synthetic engine oils. Extended drain intervals and oil sampling became synonymous with Betner. He loves the heavy duty business and the people making a living in it. He loves the products. Some say he has 5W-40 running through his veins.

Betner is now winding down a long, illustrious career in the lubricants industry. Fortunately, the CITGO colleagues who will carry his torch have been blessed to have had the opportunity to work with him, learn from him and be inspired by him. Colleagues say that nobody will ever be able to fill Betner's shoes, and perhaps nobody should even try. But rest assured, they will closely follow the footprints he has left behind.



Mark Betner
Heavy Duty Lubricants Sales Manager
CITGO Petroleum Corporation









MARK BETNER, THE INNOVATOR

To Mark Betner, selling products isn't enough. You have to sell solutions.

Scott Riebel has been with CITGO for 22 years, serving in a variety of capacities including product specialist, technical support, supply chain and marketing. Having collaborated with and sometimes supervised Betner from all of those different vantage points, Riebel says one thing has always been constant.

"Mark's only motivation is to do the job well," says Riebel, who today is CITGO marketing and customer service manager. "Mark's number-one driver has always been to educate and assist. If a sale came out of it, even better."

David Ratliff, manager of CITGO's lubricants sales group, says the greatest characterization of Betner is his tremendous passion for what he has been involved with on the heavy duty side of CITGO's business. "When you start talking to Mark about diesel engines, you eventually start talking about CITGARD engine oil," Ratliff says. "The man almost starts to get giddy when talking about CITGARD."

"Mark was an early adopter, and was instrumental in helping to grow this new and somewhat challenging product category... Mark helped change the paradigm."

According to Ratliff, the CITGARD product line is a signature of Betner's that has positively affected a long list of people in the industry. "We have somewhere between 1,200 and 1,500 people who have access to sell CITGARD engine oil," Ratliff points out. "Probably half of them have seen Mark Betner in person and heard him talk about CITGARD. That has had a direct impact on me professionally, as has his willingness to share his knowledge and wisdom."

Ratliff recalls when he first began selling CITGARD 500 20W-50 many years ago. The product evolved and gained acceptance, and Betner was right there supporting it the entire time. The same can be said about lower-viscosity oils. "Mark was an early adopter, and was instrumental in helping to grow this new and somewhat challenging product category," Ratliff says. "Mark helped change the paradigm."

Changing a paradigm takes guts, smarts and credibility. It also takes a willingness to put your money where your mouth is. "Mark helped come up with our Guaranteed Efficiency Program," Ratliff points out. "This was his platform to help people recognize the benefits of 10W-30 several years ago. One component was oil change interval optimization. In every instance, Mark took a personal interest in a fleet's program and was determined to help it optimize its oil drain interval. He guaranteed that or offered double the money back.

"The other piece to the Guaranteed Efficiency Program was fuel economy," Ratliff continues. "If the customer didn't achieve at least 3 percent fuel economy as a result of switching from 15W-40 to our 10W-30, that was double your money back. CITGO was willing to put its money behind its technology. It was Mark Betner's idea to take it to the market very strongly like that."

Money-back guarantees aside, Ratliff says Betner's word has been invaluable to the CITGO sales force. "Mark's word is golden," Ratliff says. Another constant has been his unrelenting enthusiasm. "Mark's passion hasn't changed from the first day I'd met him to a week ago," Ratliff says.

Sales staff aren't the only ones who have come to appreciate Betner's technical expertise. Steve Bowles, CITGO's senior lubes product specialist, has worked closely with Betner over the past five years. The two have been responsible for CITGO's heavy duty formulations. "I formulate the products, and Mark helps sell them—because he knows diesel engines left and right," Bowles says.

Betner also knows people left and right—and he appreciates them as much as they do him. Bowles thinks about how quick Betner has been to praise his colleagues, often through the "Heavy Duty News Alerts" he emails out on a regular basis.

"Mark always wants to make sure the entire CITGO organization knows about the great things his heavy duty team is accomplishing," Bowles says. That includes everything from new product developments and landing new clients to feats of a more personal nature. Brittany Bangert, CITGO lubricants marketing program manager, ran in the Boston Marathon one year ago. "Mark wrote up this whole story comparing Brittany's endurance and perseverance to that of CITGO's heavy duty engine oils," Bowles tells.

It is that uncanny ability to connect with an audience—and both educate and entertain at the same time—that makes Betner such a hot commodity.

"Mark and I both work with additive companies," Bowles points out. "We recently did an engine teardown on a field trial. It was a truck with 800,000 miles that had been running with CITGO's CITGARD 700 MFE (FA-4 10W-30), a very low-viscosity oil that gives great fuel economy. The engines looked great. We actually shot a video of the teardown, but Mark did most of the talking because he is so great at it."

Henry Pianalto, senior director of maintenance for J.B. Hunt, has done a lot of product testing for various manufacturers. Testing various oils and greases is how he met Betner.

"Back around 2013, we were looking to expand our service intervals," Pianalto says. "Mark and his team at CITGO came in and presented their case in terms of what their products would produce for us. What I'd noticed right away is what a strong team player Mark Betner was, and that everyone really respected him."

Another thing Pianalto immediately noticed was Betner's technical acumen. "He could always 'talk shop' with people like me who are technicians at heart," Pianalto relates. "Some reps would have to make a phone call to the right person in order to get the right answers. Mark never seemed to have to. Having grown up in this business, I realize you can really get into some technical discussions regarding the chemistry and performance of certain products. Mark could always understand right where I was coming from."

Pianalto says he'll miss working with Betner when he retires. "He has always been a pillar of the industry," Pianalto says. "When Mark says something is going to happen, it happens. He has always followed up with his team and kept things on schedule. The honesty and integrity I've seen over the years is really impressive."

Dave Fast, vice president of maintenance for Dayton Freight, often relied on Betner to help identify ways to lower his fleet's operating costs. "I remember working with Mark way back when we first switched from a standard-weight oil to a 15W-40," Fast says. "Then CITGO came out with a partial synthetic that we successfully ran for quite a while. I'd have trucks with nearly a million miles that didn't use more than two or three quarts of oil every 10,000 or 15,000 miles."

A LOOK BACK 2001

LubeAlert

CITGO introduces LubeAlert, a state-of-the-art fluid condition monitoring service used for predictive and preventive equipment maintenance. Leveraging decades of collected data, LubeAlert documents equipment trends, provides insights into equipment condition and alerts users to developing issues to help plan maintenance activities. The general manager of this program at the time wanted to take advantage of the success with CITGO's gas engine oil analysis program by implementing a heavy duty version. The program grew to enrolling approximately 170,000 units in the years to follow.

"He was always interested in finding ways to help enhance our operation and lower our costs as far as fluids went."

Fast points out that he is "pretty religious" when it comes to his PMs, which is one reason he gets such impressive longevity out of many of his engines. He says the quality of the oil also deserves a lot of credit. And then there's Mark Betner.

"Mark is quite the gentleman, and he knows this industry inside and out," Fast shares. "He was always willing to give me a helping hand and work to improve a product based on feedback from people like me. He was always interested in finding ways to help enhance our operation and lower our costs as far as fluids went."

Fast says Betner would call from time to time, just to check in—especially if he was traveling through Ohio. "Mark would always call to see if he could stop by, or maybe ask if I wanted to meet him somewhere," Fast says. "I got to know Mark even better through attending TMC meetings over the years. He always stayed up on the industry, constantly looking for areas of improvement. To be honest, Mark always seemed to stay *ahead* of the industry."

MARK BETNER, AND EXTENDED DRAIN INTERVALS

Kyle Neumann, maintenance director for Foodliner and Quest Liner, has been working with Mark Betner for the past nine years. The two first met when Neumann expressed a desire to extend his fleet's oil change intervals.

"We invited several of the oil companies in," Neumann recalls. "We had about 700 trucks at the time. We told everybody that we didn't want to do 10 trucks one year and another 10 the second year. We wanted to jump in both feet first and do all 700. We said we wanted the right company backing us with the right oil that would help get us to where we wanted to be—and not have engine failures. Most of the oil companies wanted to do a sample and were very conservative about it. Mark Betner, on the other hand, didn't bat an eye."

The initial goal was to extend from 24,000 miles to 48,000 (miles). "We did it," Neumann says. "Fast forward five years later, we did not have a single engine issue due to the oil. That's also when we started to get into the DD13 engine platform with Detroit. We went to Mark Betner and said we wanted to extend our intervals again, this time out to nine months and 72,000 miles. Mark went back behind the scenes to do some investigating. He came back and said he was confident we could do it."

Betner had one stipulation, though: Neumann had to make a commitment to oil sampling. "We equipped our entire fleet with oil sample ports, per Mark's recommendation," Neumann says. "When we extended out to 72,000 (miles), we decided to do a dry preventive maintenance at 24,000 and another one at 48,000, pulling an oil sample each time. We monitor them every day. Mark does, too. If he sees any abnormalities, he'll pick up the phone and call me. Sometimes I send him a sample and ask him to look at something. I know that behind the scenes, Mark continues working to help us achieve our goal. Knock on wood, but we have yet to lose an engine due to an oil-related issue."

Betner's counsel has been instrumental in helping Neumann's fleet achieve its goal. Betner's honesty and integrity are what gave Neumann the confidence to even try. Neumann wasn't even doing any business with CITGO until Betner came in to discuss those oil change intervals. "Mark was the outsider coming in," Neumann says. "But he was extremely confident right away. We have never second guessed him, for good reason. Mark would never tell you something just to get your business."

To that point, another CITGO product Neumann began using at Betner's suggestion was Mystik grease. "We're still using it today," Neumann says. "The product has done exactly what Mark said it was going to do. It has been great."

Since meeting Betner nine years ago, Neumann says Foodliner/Quest Liner is now running 100-percent CITGO lubes and oils. "I think we're on our fourth version of oil, and are now getting ready to transition to FA-4," Neumann points out. "Mark has always kept us on the cutting edge of engine oil, and he is always upfront about what will and will not work."

Brent Hilton, director of maintenance for Maverick Transportation, has worked closely with Mark Betner to develop his fleet's oil analysis program. "I'd challenged Mark to look at some of our oil samples to determine what our drain intervals should be relative to our applications," Hilton tells. "We ended up being able to extend our intervals from 50,000 to 70,000 (miles) due to the results of our oil sampling program. Our OE also said we were good to go at 70,000 based on the results of those tests. Mark played a vital role in all of that."

Hilton first got to know Betner through their involvement with TMC. "I've always known that Mark was an expert in what he does," Hilton says. "Mark is very technically sound when it comes to new oils—and there has been a lot going on in that area for the past eight years or so. He has always raised his hand to volunteer for TMC panel discussions or seminars, and his webinars are great."

Hilton has only been buying CITGO products for the past couple years. He can't say that Betner is the sole reason why; his purchasing decision has had more to do with product quality and price competitiveness. But having a resource like Betner has definitely factored in.

A LOOK BACK 2012



CITGO introduces the Guaranteed Efficiency Program. By using a qualified commercial, heavy duty CITGO engine oil, users are guaranteed to achieve up to 3 percent fuel economy savings, or up to triple the time between oil changes. If not, they get double their money back.

MARK BETNER, THE EDUCATOR

Marvin Kerkstra, a longtime CITGO employee who now serves as a senior adviser, says Mark Betner is one of those rare individuals who is kind of ubiquitous in the trucking industry. "Mark is here, there and everywhere," Kerkstra says. "He'd often bring customers by the lube plant in Cicero, Illinois, that I used to manage. That's how I first got to know Mark."

Kerkstra says Betner has always been an evangelist for new products that would help customers improve fuel economy, extend drain intervals and lower operating costs.

"Take a look at the latest transition for CITGO in going from CJ-4 to CK-4 with a branch going to FA-4," Kerkstra relates. "That wasn't the easiest. Mark had to take a subject like that and tell it in a way that everyone could wrap their heads around. He has had to explain what the industry and OEMs are trying to do, along with what the additive suppliers are capable of doing. He has had to educate both our customers and marketers (distributors) to not only meet the requirements of the industry, but to help turn them into product evangelists themselves."

Molly Thompson, a CITGO senior account manager, works mostly with CITGO marketers (distributors). To her customers in the upper-Midwest, Betner has been viewed almost like a celebrity. But in terms of his persona, he has been anything but. "Regardless of who you are or what you do, Mark makes you feel special—and it is 100-percent genuine," Thompson says.

Personality aside, Thompson's distributor customers have also liked Betner because of his knowledge. Thompson is often asked if she could schedule Mark to come put on classes. "Mark really knows his stuff," Thompson says. "He treats the world like his classroom. In every instance, people leave one of Mark's classes with far more knowledge than they arrived with."

Barb Goodyear, CITGO territory sales manager for New York and New England, has also called on Mark Betner to put on seminars for her marketer sales reps, not to mention some of the bigger fleet customers in her territory. "Mark also went on a lot of sales calls with me and my team," Goodyear relates. "He has done it all."

Ted Burke is one of those CITGO marketers. As president of Dennis K. Burke in Taunton, Massachusetts, he has worked with Betner for the past decade or so.

"We've spent a lot of time pushing premium synthetic oils over the years," Burke says. "There are three parts to Mark that have really meant a lot to me and my sales team. First, he has amazing knowledge of lubricants. Second, he has great sales skills. And third, he really understands fleet operations. It's pretty rare for someone to be so good in all three areas."

A LOOK BACK 2013

CITGO introduces CITGARD SynDurance Plus Synthetic Heavy Duty Engine Oils, an API-licensed CJ-4 product. Advanced Fuel Efficiency Formula delivers maximum fuel economy, extreme cold-temperature performance, superior wear protection and oil consumption control. Available in 5W-30 and 5W-40. A great alternative to SAE 15W-40 oils which were widely used at the time.



Jason Miller, a CITGO senior national account manager, spends most of his time calling on heavy duty, on-highway fleet businesses. He has made a lot of those sales calls with Betner. "People love to see Mark," Miller relates. "He has this ability to simplify the complex. He has never hesitated to say 'yes' when asked to travel to see customers."

Like both Molly Thompson and David Ratliff, Miller worked for a CITGO marketer prior to joining CITGO. Miller first met Betner in 2005 while working as an outside sales rep for that marketer. "Mark is one of the first people I'd met in this industry and learned to lean on," Miller tells. "When I was later promoted and became sales manager, Mark helped train my sales force."

The sales team was trained on one of those products, CITGARD 700, in 2010 when 10W-30s were hitting the market.

"CITGO actually offered a 10W-30 before most of our biggest competitors did," Miller points out. "Mark Betner's coaching gave us the knowledge to go out and talk to the market about this product. This was a pivotal point in my career where I became really passionate about the heavy duty business. The market was starting to ask for an oil that would give them better energy efficiency and fuel economy. The market was asking about oil certifications and approvals. Mark Betner had a lot to do with that."

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CITGO LUBRICANTS

Your world is always asking you to do more—often lots more—with less. Fleets large and small focus on the economic benefits of improving the productivity and efficiency of their people, equipment, fuel and lubricants. This is where CITGO Lubricants comes in. We know your lubricant needs vary as much as the equipment you use and you deserve better than a one-size-fits-all answer. That's why we work hard to create customized solutions based on the optimal combination of products and programs that meet our customers' needs.

Four Categories of CITGO Heavy Duty Lubricants Products

CITGO Lubricants provides total equipment protection for your on-highway applications.

- Heavy Duty Engine Oils
- Drivetrain Fluids
- Hydraulic Fluids
- Greases

CITGO Backs You Up With Customized Technical Support, Efficiency Programs, Warranties and Personal Customer Service

To make our products match your work, we back them up with skilled lubrication technicians and industry experts. We operate a state-of-the-art laboratory to help you solve specific application challenges. Utilizing these assets, proprietary programs and our strong experience, we recommend the most effective lubricants solutions for you.

LubeAlert®

You get unique industry-leading programs from CITGO Lubricants and our LubeAlert® Fluid Condition Monitoring Service. These help you optimize your service intervals, extend equipment life, save money and reduce your carbon footprint.

We know our products will perform to your expectations. One of the best warranties in the business, the Guaranteed Efficiency Program, backs our plan.

For more details on the warranty or our products, visit **CITGOLubes.com** or contact **1-800-248-4684**.

MARK BETNER, THE UNICORN

Marvin Kerkstra says that Mark Betner's love for the heavy duty business has been unprecedented. "Anybody who has anything to do with a truck or engine oil immediately has a new friend in Mark," Kerkstra says. "That could be a professional driver or a trucking company owner."

Betner's ability to relate to people at all levels of the industry has arguably been his most impressive trait. "Mark finds a way to speak someone's language," Kerkstra points out. "If he is meeting with an additive company, he can be one of the best at arguing the finer points of TBN (total base number). If he is meeting with a fleet owner or a group of drivers, he can talk drain intervals and oil analysis."

Molly Thompson says Betner has the uncanny ability to make his students feel valued. The same can be said for how he has made his coworkers feel. Thompson says she was also struck by how eager Mark has always been to help the people around him be successful. "He has always made me and others feel like such a valuable part of the team," Thompson adds.

Fortunately for Thompson, she has been able to play on Betner's team for more than a decade. While she is sad to hear those days are numbered, she is happy for her mentor. She is also unconvinced that Betner will be able to completely walk away from the business he has loved for so long.

"Mark has maintained such great relationships throughout the industry—people who share his passions," Thompson says. "He has always kept in touch with people he'd met years ago. I'm sure he will continue to maintain his connections and never completely leave this business. All of my distributors in Michigan were begging to see Mark when they'd heard rumblings about his retirement."

"Mark has maintained such great relationships throughout the industry—people who share his passions."

Those customer relationships are a testament to the respect Betner has earned throughout the industry. Thompson thinks about a customer in the Elkhart, Ind., area. Betner had a real fondness for raspberry cream pie. A local Amish center made a good one, and Betner always referenced it when talking about his travels throughout Indiana, the state he grew up in. "One of my customers, Yoder Oil, bought one of those pies and drove it two hours to our meeting in Indianapolis as a surpise for Mark, because he knew how much he loved it," Thompson says.

It's not every day that a customer will do something like that for one of their suppliers. But then again, it's not every day that somebody has a supplier like Mark Betner.

"The neat thing about Mark is that he fits into every world," Thompson says. "One day he can be having dinner with the president of a corporation, and the next morning he can be helping a technician break down an engine in a shop. It's all the same to Mark."

Striking a nerve with customers also comes naturally to Betner. Steve Bowles points to one classic Betner line that has captured the attention of fleet owners across the country. "There were always customers who insisted on going cheap with oil," Bowles says. "Mark would break it down. He'd point out that, on average, you might spend $250 a year on oil. The typical truck driver spends $600 on coffee. In other words, there are a lot better ways to save a few bucks than going cheap on engine oil."

"I don't think anybody will ever be able to fill Mark Betner's shoes, and nobody should even try," Thompson says. "A lot of people have great communication skills. A lot of people have great technical skills. Not many people have both. Mark Betner is as rare as a unicorn." ■

A LOOK BACK 2016

CITGO introduces CITGARD 700 MFE. This 10W-30 synthetic blend oil is engineered for maximum fuel efficiency and API FA-4 compliant engines. It is formulated to protect engines running at higher operating temperatures and fuel-injection pressures, while meeting tighter wear limits and lower emission requirements.



Q&A WITH MARK BETNER

A conversation with CITGO's Heavy Duty Lubricants Manager



By Gregg Wartgow, contributing editor

Q: Beyond helping to develop and sell CITGO products, what do you feel your "mission" has been over the past 30 years?

I remember giving a presentation in Grand Rapids, Michigan, once. A fleet manager's phone rang about 20 times in 45 minutes. He was very apologetic and said he was going to have his calls rerouted so he wouldn't keep interrupting the presentation. I told him not to worry because I understood he needed to run his business. I then told him that he could have had an easier job as an air traffic controller at the Detroit airport. I always told fleet managers and equipment owners that they could have had far easier jobs.

Fleet managers have a tremendous responsibility. They are in charge of very expensive equipment. They have very tight budgets and tough schedules. I have always tried to maintain the attitude that our job is to make our customers' jobs as efficient and painless as possible. Anybody can sell and deliver products like lubricants and fuel. Finding a way to make the process easier and more efficient is what really matters.

Q: Of all the memorable things you have experienced and accomplished at CITGO, what brings the biggest smile to your face?

I'd have to say that this one goes back about 20 years. At that time we (CITGO) were only aware of one other major oil company doing a good job marketing a full synthetic, heavy duty engine oil. We saw an opportunity in the Chicago market to push forward with a full synthetic, heavy duty 5W-40.

I wanted to create a special name for this new product, as opposed to something generic-sounding like you often saw with engine oils. I was sitting on my patio with a neighbor one Saturday afternoon. I told him about the product and that I needed a name for it. He said, "OK, so the oil is fully synthetic and has the benefit of longer service life? So the product has great endurance?" The light bulb went on. We just came up with a great name: SynDurance. That name has now been around for 20 years. In fact, CITGO ended up assigning that name to an entire family of products, not just engine oil.

Q: So many colleagues have relied upon your advice and assistance for so long. How will they ever survive without you?

We have some really outstanding leadership in our lubricants busi-



» **Left, restored 1952 Ford 8N Purchased new by the Betner family. Now used in tractor parades Mark is a member of the Blue Bonnet, Texas Antique Tractor Club.**



» **Mark Attending CITGO Lubes School in 1989**

ness unit now. That's going to be a very positive thing for CITGO going forward. I have a lot of confidence in the talented people I've been working with over the past couple of years.

I hate to refer to it as "the younger generation," but the talent CITGO has today is highly energized and has that "eye of the tiger." The skillset these people possess is really interesting. One of those talented people, Jason Miller, I first got to know when he was working with a CITGO marketer. After joining CITGO several years ago, he has done some amazing things with fleets. It has been a pleasure watching Jason and many others like him become established. I think there are some really good things to come from CITGO.

Q: So you are really setting your sights on retirement, then?

I've been in the lubricants industry for a little over 40 years, 30 of them with CITGO. I first started thinking it could be time to step aside back in late 2017. However, I started feeling a little re-energized a few months ago. That said, I'm not going to hang around just to hang around, or simply because I like people. I want to continue making a contribution to CITGO and our business unit. So the time will come, although I don't have a specific date in mind quite yet.

Q: When that time does come, what are you looking forward to doing?

I have always loved heavy equipment, going back to my childhood growing up in an agricultural area of Indiana. My dad wasn't a full-time farmer, but he loved tractors and actually collected old garden tractors. That rubbed off on me.

Now I have my own collection of more than 50 antique outboard motors. I belong to the antique boat club. I restored the last tractor my dad owned, a 1952 Ford 8N. I have always enjoyed pretty much anything with an engine. With working and traveling for CITGO, I naturally haven't had as much time to devote to these other loves of my life. So when I do have the time, that's what I am going to do.

Aside from that, I'm not sure if there will be any areas of the business that I will still be able to support in some way. I'm very committed to helping people who sell lubricants. I enjoy helping create sales-based product presentations, for instance.

In our industry, many people haven't had enough training on how to properly sell lubricants. The unfortunate thing in the lubricants world is that the cost of the equipment is a miss. It can cost as much as $180,000 a year to keep a Class A tractor-trailer on the highway before the fleet even makes any money. Lubricants represent just a couple pennies on the variable operating maintenance budget dollar. Equipment owners too frequently think in terms of pricing, and not enough in terms of the productive value a good lubricant brings to the table.

For example, there are over five different tiers of heavy duty engine oils today. Every company has an API CK-4 engine oil. However, many consumers don't realize they have four or five options that should be matched to their operating conditions and maintenance goals. The industry too often wants to say here is our CK-4 at this viscosity grade, and this is the price range at which we can sell it to you. I like to see the conversation be more about solutions for fleets and their unique operating conditions and goals. ■



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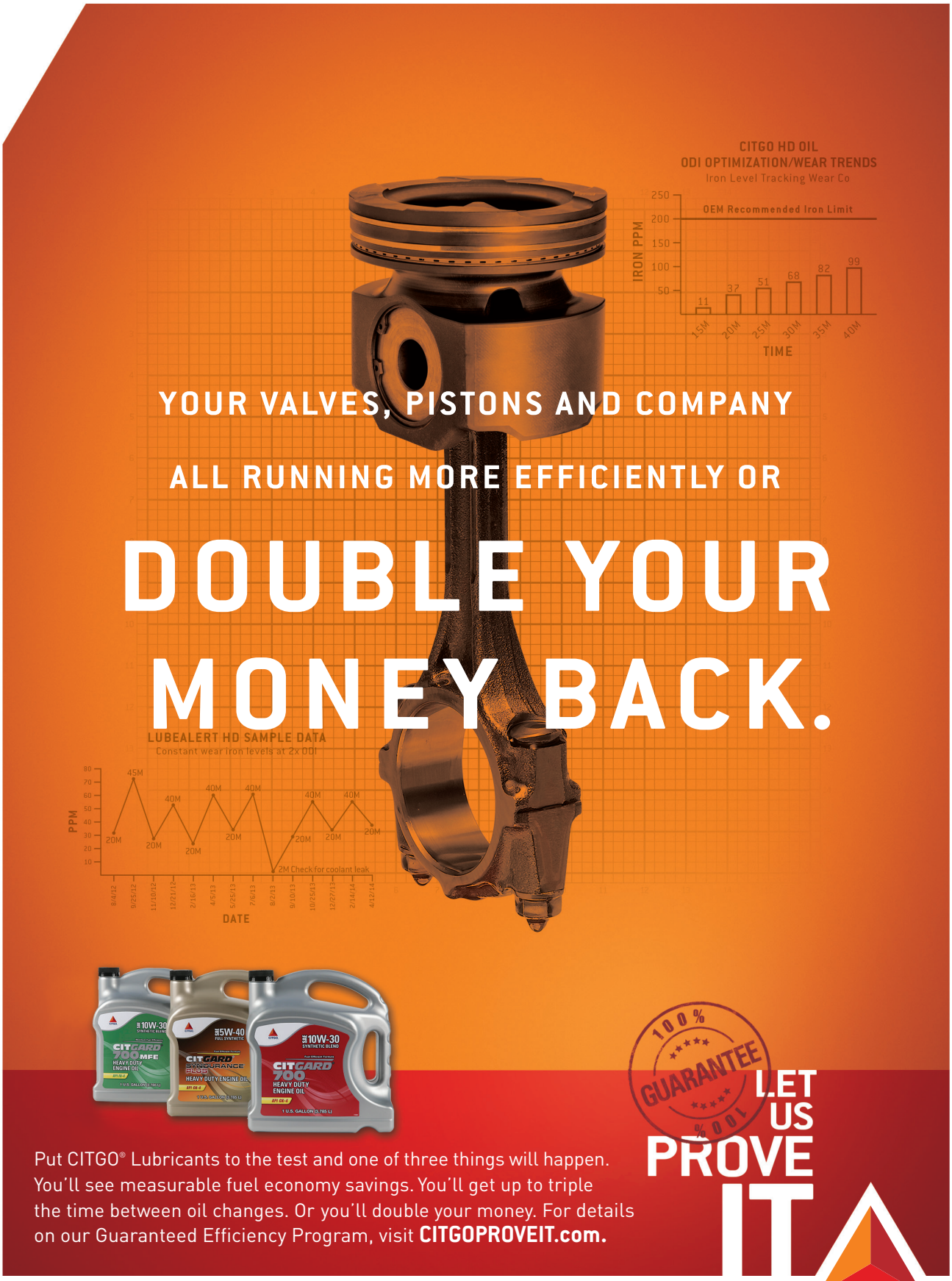

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