Twelve months ago, I humbly took office as your FEDA president and have had the pleasure of working with the Association’s leadership on a number of important initiatives. As we moved forward, I’d like to take this opportunity to discuss what we’ve accomplished so far, and the direction we’re headed.

**FEDA Data Interchange Initiative (FDI)—74 Manufacturers are on Board**

We’ve worked extensively with AutoQuotes over the past year to develop an order-status platform that will reduce costs, increase productivity, and eliminate the mundane task of manually checking order status—and the industry’s response has been overwhelmingly enthusiastic. FEDA member organizations now have the ability to view order confirmations, expected ship dates, backordered items, and obtain shipment tracking information from within AutoQuotes. At last count, there were 74 manufacturers signed on to the project and we expect more to embrace FDI in the coming weeks.

Member feedback also has been enormously positive, along with a tidal wave of suggestions for enhancements. Future plans for FDI involve more than just order status, it’s about developing standards that can be used for additional functionality, such as stock status and electronic purchase orders. You’ll see FDI continue to grow and evolve as it progressively transforms data communications within our industry.

**Interior Design**

For many years now, FEDA has advocated supporting efforts to fight interior design legislation. We’ve been successful in these efforts thanks to strong member support and an effective lobbying advocate who’s represented our interests whenever new legislation is proposed. While we play this game of whack-a-mole on a state-by-state basis, we’ve also stepped back to take a fresh look at this issue and evaluate the viability of various scenarios to end this fight once and for all. In the meantime, we ask that you continue to help us fight this battle. The consequences of sitting back and doing nothing are far too dangerous for individual dealerships and for FEDA as an organization.

**Membership**

FEDA realizes our industry is changing. There’s the impact of consolidation, the entry of VC firms, geographic boundaries being eliminated, new and changing business models, continued erosion of margins, a widening gap between large

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and small dealers—all of which is redefining how our businesses operate and what it means to be a dealer in this day and age. In response, FEDA is working diligently to develop strategies and explore what changes we should make to continue to serve members of all types and sizes. We’ve had some great dialogue already and we certainly welcome your input as we continue down this path.

Accolades
FEDA continues to honor the vendor partners that have exhibited their support for dealer-based distribution through our Exceptional Manufacturers program. We’ve also recognized our Diamond Donors, all of which have demonstrated their commitment to enhancing dealer education with a generous financial contribution. Both of these programs were initiated by my predecessor, Brad Wasserstrom, but will continue to be embraced as valuable resources throughout my administration.

Collaboration
I’ve previously remarked on how our industry works in silos, and while we communicate often, we do not collaborate nearly enough. Over the past year, I’ve joined with the leadership of our allied associations to tear down those walls and we’ve had great success in this endeavor. The groundswell of support we’ve received for the FEDA Data Interchange Initiative, for example, has been instrumental in its execution and is exemplary of how we can all benefit from a concerted effort to communicate and partner.

We’ve also gained respect for each other’s contributions to the channel—CFESA’s new global training center in South Carolina; the holistic view of the industry provided by MAFSI’s market forecasts, and NAFEM’s initiative to recruit new talent and develop future leaders. FEDA’s relationship with NAFEM, MAFSI, CFESA and FCSI is stronger than ever and it’s truly been a great experience working with each of these respected organizations.

Lastly, it’s been an honor to serve you for the past year and I am looking forward to all that’s to come in the second half of my term. I’m thankful to each of you as members; this organization is strong because of your support and your commitment to running the best dealerships in the industry. FEDA is your Association and I’m always only a phone call or email away if you have suggestions or ideas, as to how we can better serve your needs. ☐