



# HMCA hosts dealer parts and service managers

**B**eginning in 2014, Hitachi Construction Machinery Loaders America Inc. (HCMA) initiated its inaugural Parts and Service Seminar, an opportunity for dealers and HCMA Parts and Service Support staff to get together for a weekend of presentations and networking. This year's seminar was held at Callaway Resort and Gardens in Pine Mountain, Georgia, and introduced a variety of new topics, programs and discussion panels.

The event marked the introduction of the new HCMA organization to dealer parts and service managers. The goal was to introduce new programs, processes and personnel to the group. "We had an aggressive agenda, introducing extended warranty programs, parts and pricing updates, and new policies and procedures. We took the time to dive into the details — the administrative part of the job they don't get a lot of training on," explains Mike Dixon, field services manager. Dixon has been with HCMA for 12 years and has 30 years of industry experience. He provided emphasis on the introduction of the new ConSite Rescue Team (CRT) program, presenting on the

program himself and leading roundtable discussions to ensure participants understood the benefits to both dealers and customers. CRT focuses on using new, advanced technology to detect potential or existing failures, and provides service managers with recommended maintenance procedures, ensuring fast, accurate response times to guarantee quality customer service from dealers to their customers. "I call CRT the flagship of the ConSite Program on the service side," Dixon says. "We're using this program to promote the after sales support at the dealership. Our purpose is to predict and prevent machine failure."

The seminar was also an opportunity to highlight the benefits of the changes the company is experiencing since becoming a Hitachi company. HCMA is more technologically focused with greater ability to advance in the industry due to the use of telematics and Global e-Service. "I think it opened their eyes to the new opportunities the programs and service support Hitachi offers," Dixon says. "We are taking it to the next level." Also introduced was the new extended warranty plan, which includes a 2,000-hour maintenance kit, field information report, and G-claim, the new warranty

claim system for Hitachi wheel loaders. Roundtable discussions and direct participation from the Hitachi executive management was very insightful. Gregg French, manager of service operations, has been with the company since 1991. French stated, "It made a good impression on our dealers experiencing the vice president presenting an overview of the current and future goals of the company." Day two of the seminar involved a tour of the new HCMA headquarters, which recently opened in Newnan, Georgia, and the manufacturing facility. This was the first opportunity many dealers, parts and service personnel had to visit the facility.

In addition to the service programs introduced, parts department managers and representatives met HCMA's newest addition, Sales and Parts Support Manager Carmine Dionisio. Dionisio has been in product support and customer service management roles since the mid-1980s, and he brings with him a vision of success and growth in the industry. "I'd like to see sales, service and parts grow together. I'd like to focus on customer service; it's always been part of who I am and we have a lot to offer," Dionisio says.

HCMA vendors Cummins, Polaris, JRB and Miller Heiman were all represented by presenters who spoke on a range of topics of interest to Hitachi parts and service departments. "Cummins made a presentation on the opportunities dealers had to become Cummins-certified dealers, which gives our dealers the ability to become a one stop shop for their customers," French says.

Henry Neicamp with Polaris spoke extensively on the importance of oil samples, as well as the Polaris smartphone app and online accessibility. Karen Allinder with Miller Heiman Group spoke about the importance of customer interaction while on the job site and offered new methods that would allow dealers to be more efficient with the services they provide. French discussed the impact Allinder made on the group. "I think she enlightened a lot of people with the data she provided. Dealers saw first-hand the potential their service departments have using new techniques."

Dealers were given the opportunity to participate in several networking and social events as well. "That's one of the advantages of having events like we have at night, we get to review the day in a very social environment. The dealers really tell you what they think and you get to learn a lot from these people,"



HCMA Service and Support Managers led round table discussions to further expand on programs, ideas, and processes introduced throughout the conference.

French says. "We had lots of fun with our dealers, and at the same time, they got to learn. We got to know them better, we got to build a relationship with them." Dixon also emphasized the importance of the evening gatherings. "It was very busy, we had a lot of time through the day for meeting. But in the evenings, we had a lot of individual conversations with everyone. We were able to socialize and network with them."

The most important takeaway was the future growth and opportunity the seminar highlighted. The goal was to enhance an already strong dealer network, show support and opportunities, and provide the programs for dealers to build relationships with their customers. "The seminar was our way to take the next step to show our dealers the support we're giving them," Dixon says.

The final day's question-and-answer session is one of French's favorite portions of the event. "You realize people are actually listening and they're getting it. It's a better understanding of what we're trying to do. We're trying to educate them. So when you get questions, you know that people are listening and you know that they're participating."

French has heard from multiple dealers since the end of the seminar. "I've already been contacted by several of our dealers, asking questions and wanting to know more about our programs. It opened a communication portal with them." Dionisio summed up the event by concluding, "The seminar is an essential tool for communication. It brings the entire network together, from dealers to warranty, to service, to sales, to product support. It connects everyone with one goal and that goal is supporting Hitachi Wheel Loaders." ■