



EQUUS PRODUCTS, INC. ANNOUNCES 2003 CUSTOMER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Recipients include CSK Auto, Canadian Tire and Midway Auto Supply

([PRWEB](#)) November 27, 2003 -- FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. Equus Products, Inc., announces its 2003 Customer of the Year Awards, marking the first time the company has given awards in three distinct categories. This year's auto parts chain honoree is Phoenix-based CSK Auto, Inc., a 1,100-store chain operating under the brand names Checker Auto Parts, Schucks Auto Supply and Krage Auto Parts. The mass-merchandise recipient is Toronto-based Canadian Tire Corporation, Canada's leading automotive, sports and leisure, and home products retailer, operating 449 stores. Midway Auto Supply, a three-store Dallas-based auto parts chain, is the growth category recipient.

Equus Products will present these awards, along with its 2003 Sales Representative of the Year awards, during the AAPEX Show (Sands Booth #2046) being held November 4-7 in Las Vegas.

CSK Auto, Inc.

"The team at CSK Auto has shown exceptional commitment to implementing changes that have resulted in an approximate 200 percent increase in sales of our Test & Tune products over the past three years," said Leon C. Chen, Equus CEO. "We attribute this success to an innovative diagnostic tool point-of-purchase store display, CSK company-wide support of our products as demand for automotive diagnostic tools grows, and Equus updated easy-to-use products."

According to Mike Thompson, CSK's general merchandising manager, "Our point-of-purchase store display allows customers to familiarize themselves with the products and get a hands-on shopping experience. The new display is installed in all 1,100 stores thanks to funding, design and new products from Equus."

CSK Auto and Equus Products continue to see positive results in sales attributed to the 1999 line supplier change and diagnostic tool point-of-purchase display, which is prominently merchandised on an end-cap location across from the service counter. The display provides customers with products, product descriptions and tips for diagnosing their vehicles with these easy-to-use tools.

"When we compared CSK's per store sales to its bigger competitors by product category (code reader, timing light, mechanical tester, etc.), we found that they out-performed the competition 25 percent to 200 percent in every category," said Chen. "Equus took a risk by incurring substantial costs as part of a partnership with CSK Auto in 1999, but it turned out to be a worthwhile long-term move. We are pleased to honor them as a 2003 Customer of the Year."

Canadian Tire Corporation

As a longtime supplier of test equipment and gauges to Canadian Tire Corporation, Equus has had many successes with the chain. Most recently, Equus was selected as the exclusive supplier of Canadian Tire's Automotive Test & Tune line. The two-year agreement includes a comprehensive assortment of products



designed to meet the needs of Canadian Tire's DIY customers.

"When we began the Automotive Test & Tune line review, we were looking for the vendor who could bring us the best value assortment in terms of quality, competitive pricing, selection, features and innovation dominance," said Scott Bennett, Canadian Tire's associate category manager. "Equus was invited to participate because they are a longtime Canadian Tire supplier, and we had previous success with promoting their 4320 Digital Multimeter. As expected, Equus has delivered a solid program that we project will help us double our annual category sales."

Canadian Tire has had substantial results with Equus promotions this year. First, the chain sold more than 65,000 of the 4320 Digital Multimeters in a two week-period. Then, during a spring promotion, the chain sold more of Equus' 3100s in one week than they sold of the competitor's OBD II code readers all last year.

"It is clear from the thorough review process that Canadian Tire buyers Scott Bennett and David J. Kelly are committed to the success of this line," said Chen. "From updated merchandising to full advertising support, Canadian Tire has gone the extra mile in their commitment to a successful partnership with Equus Products. They are well deserving of this award, and we look forward to much future success."

Midway Auto Supply

Midway Auto Supply jumped from a position as one of Equus' smallest customers to ranking in the top five sellers of our 3100 Code Reader, and increasing its overall Test & Tune and Gauge purchases by more than 1,200 percent this year.

The secret to success for this family-owned chain has been a combination of aggressive marketing, willingness to try new products and well-executed Internet use. According to Midway's Larry Levine, the company launched its website around the time Equus debuted its 3100 OBD II Code Reader. Midway was one of the first customers to utilize the opportunity to link to the www.iEQUUS.com website. Since then, the 3100 has become the top selling item on the www.MidwayAutoSupply.com website.

"Midway Auto Supply may be small by industry standards, but it is truly a giant when you look at the chain's commitment to sales of our products," said Maria L. Ibach, Equus' sales controller. "They have been extremely proactive with stocking and marketing our new products, from battery testers to performance gauges and tachometers. In this case being small gives them an advantage over many larger chains. I can pick up the phone, mention a new product to Larry, have his order and see it on their website all in one day."

About Equus Products, Inc.

Equus Products, Inc., is a leading manufacturer and distributor of test equipment, gauges and tachometers for the automotive aftermarket. Founded in 1982, the company markets and distributes its line under the EQUUS® and INNOVA® brands to major retail and WD accounts throughout the U.S., Canada and Mexico. The sales, service and warehousing facilities for North America are located in Fountain Valley, Calif., and Vancouver, B.C. For more information, visit, www.iEQUUS.com or AAPEX Sands Booth #2046.



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