



## Braving the world of auto sales

Braverman Auto Sales owner 'stands behind his vehicles'

By DAVID L. SHAW

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WATERLOO — Cars have always interested Dan Braverman.

He's not sure why. Cars were not a family business. It just seemed to happen.

It's happened well enough that Braverman has made a good living for himself and his family selling late-model, low-mileage used cars for nearly 20 years.

While he will celebrate the 20th anniversary of his retail auto sales business in December, he's worked with cars in various forms since graduating from Geneva High School in 1979.

"I started out working at several area new car dealers, D'Amico, Bill Cram and Peter Koch," Braverman explained. "I started out washing cars and ended up in sales."

In 1985, he was sales manager at the Peter Koch Chrysler dealership in Seneca Falls. In 1990, he switched to the wholesale side of the used-car business.

Braverman attended auto auctions and checked out recently traded-in vehicles at dealer lots. He'd buy and sell them on a dealer-to-dealer basis only, serving business owners from Auburn to Rochester.

"That became tough because many dealers were doing their own wholesale business, and it was getting harder and harder for me to find cars to buy and sell because the dealers were doing it themselves," he said.

That's when he made the leap to open his own business.

In 1994, he opened his first used-car dealership in an old gas station on Routes 5&20, just west of the village of Waterloo, across from Cuddeback Auction House. In September 1995, he moved to his current location, taking over an existing building that formerly housed an auto-detailing and used-car sales business.

"I'm glad I made the switch," Braverman said. "It's worked out well, and I think I've established a good reputation."

"This is a good location. I wanted to be on Routes 5&20 because of the high volume of traffic and visibility."

Braverman said most of his customers come from the Geneva, Waterloo and Seneca Falls areas and many are repeat customers or referrals from satisfied buyers.

He said he's still getting his used cars from select auctions and from trade-ins at other dealers. Many of his cars are formerly leased vehicles.

"I look for cars no more than 3 years old, with relatively low mileage, which is between 30,000 and 50,000 miles, and in good condition," he said. "I recondition them, have any mechanical work done that I need and put it out on the lot. I do it all myself, which has advantages."

He likes to keep an inventory of 20 to 25 vehicles at a time and will search for a particular vehicle if a customer asks. He tends to stay away from trucks.

Two of the more popular auctions he attends to find cars are in Manheim, Pa., which is some 200 miles from Waterloo, and State Line in Waverly, Pa., which is about 80 miles away.

Although he likes domestic autos, he finds that about half of what he's selling, based on demand from customers, are Korean-made Hyundai and Kia models.

"I've got some Chrysler minivans, which are still popular, and some Mustangs, Camaros and Corvettes in season, but people are asking for the Hyundais and Kias," he said. "I'm not sure why. There isn't much difference between domestics and imports today."

Braverman said prices are negotiable, but he believes his prices are fair and can be supported by facts. Each vehicle has an "Auto Check" report on its history, similar to Carfax reports.

He's seen numerous changes in the retail used-car business over his 20 years. One of them is price. He was selling a 1999 Ford Escort in 2002 for about \$7,500; earlier this year, he had a 2011 Ford Taurus for sale with a price tag of \$15,700.

"The Internet has been another big change in this business," Braverman noted. "People can go online and see all of my vehicles. Most of my customers do that, rather than stop in and look over cars in the lot."

"It used to be people would check out cars lots in Sundays and come in on Mondays to talk about a purchase. That's rare today."

Braverman said he does not sell cars that have been in an accident.

Another trend is a shift away from manual transmis-

**Business**  
of the **WEEK**

### Braverman Auto Sales

**Location:** 1076 Waterloo-  
Geneva Road, Waterloo

**Founded:**  
December 1994

**Employees:** 1,  
owner Dan Braverman

**Hours:** 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.  
Mondays; 9 a.m. to 5  
p.m. Tuesday to Friday; 9  
a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays;  
closed Sundays

**Phone:** 539-1242

**Website:** www.braverman  
autosales.com



Spencer Tulis photos / Finger Lakes Times

Dan Braverman (top) will celebrate the 20th anniversary of his retail auto sales business in December. Braverman said most of his customers come from the Geneva, Waterloo and Seneca Falls areas, and many are repeat customers or referrals from satisfied buyers.

sion. Although Braverman personally prefers a stick shift, customers want automatic.

Only two of his cars onsite right now have manual transmissions.

Nate Shumway of Tyre said he and his immediate family have bought seven or eight vehicles from Braverman. When you add in his extended family, he guesses the number to be about 20 vehicles.

"The first one my wife and I bought had an issue with the starter," Shumway said. "Dan had it towed, gave us a

loaner and did the repairs at no charge to us.

"He stands behind his vehicles,"

Another vehicle he bought had a malfunctioning air conditioner. Braverman repaired that at no charge too, Shumway said.

"He gives a good price on cars we trade in," Shumway said. "We're just pleased with the way he does business. His prices are fair, and he goes out of his way to help. I've recommended him to many others, and they all seem happy as well."

## Interview process an emotional roller coaster for all

I often hear people complain that the hiring process takes too long. Either you like me or you don't, let's get on with it. From the candidate's perspective this makes sense, but as an HR professional, I get frustrated when hiring managers rush the process and make hiring decisions they regret.

The most common practice is for an employer to conduct phone screening interviews and then invite the five best qualified candidates in for an interview. The next step often is to invite back your two favorite candidates, and then decide who you want to hire. If we spend a week screening applications, a week conducting phone interviews and at least a week scheduling five personal interviews, it's easy to see how we have already invested 4 to 6 weeks before we have even chosen our two finalists.

Let's assume you reluctantly accept my explanation of why the process takes so long, the next

### GET A JOB

Bill  
Kaminski



most frequent complaint I hear is this: Why don't they give me some honest feedback on why I didn't get the job? The candidate wants the feedback so he or she can improve and do better in the next job interview. I'm totally convinced I have the skills to do the job, so was there some other reason I wasn't hired? I thought we got along really well in the job interview, so can't you give me some honest feedback? I'm not going to file a complaint with anyone; I just want to know why I wasn't your first choice?

Have you ever heard the saying: Walk a mile in my moccasins?

Imagine you're the hiring manager and you have two really well-qualified candidates as your finalists. Quite frankly, you couldn't go wrong hiring either one of them, but you've got to make a choice of who's going to be the best fit for the job and the organization.

You made your choice, and now you've got to call the person you didn't hire and tell them they didn't get the job. This is the part of my job I hate. I can hear and feel the disappointment at the other end of the phone. I know what it's like when I get called back for a second interview. I try not to get too excited, but I'm already beginning to write my letter of resignation, and I'm thinking about what I'll say at my send-off luncheon.

And then I get the call. "Sorry Bill, it was a hard decision, but you weren't our first choice. We appreciate your interest and encourage you to apply again." As soon as I heard "it was a hard decision," my emotions took over and I didn't

hear a word you said after. And even if I can remain calm enough to ask why I didn't get the job, I'm not sure I'm in a good frame of mind to objectively listen to your answer.

Here are a few words of wisdom from the perspective of those who have to deliver the bad news:

1) I'll be the first to admit that receiving the bad news is worse than delivering it — but hiring managers dread those phone calls to the people they didn't hire. The emotions are high for everyone, and it isn't the best time to have a meaningful conversation of how someone performed during the job interview and why they didn't they get the job.

2) Even if you are one of the five candidates selected for a personal interview, you need to be realistic or else you will get discouraged and you may give up looking for a job. Remember, the other candidates are well qualified and only one of you will get a job offer.

That means your odds of getting an offer are about 20 percent. So, if you get called in for five job interviews and you get even one job offer, that's about average.

I don't know if I'm succeeding, but my goal is to offer some empathy. It is hard and it can be discouraging to attempt to find a job or change jobs. When you are that one person who gets the job offer, enjoy the moment and celebrate. And if you haven't succeeded yet — don't give up! I'm optimistic the odds will eventually fall in your favor. Good luck!

Kaminski is president of Stone Associates Training. He is an HR consultant with 35 years of experience in the employment field, teaching managers the art of hiring great employees. He also is an adjunct instructor at Keuka College. You can contact him with your questions, suggestions and comments at [www.bill@stoneassociatestesting.com](http://www.bill@stoneassociatestesting.com).