

JAMES CROSTON, MBA

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SENIOR PRODUCT MANAGER | DIRECTOR OF MARKETING

Transformational product marketing leader, brand builder, and growth architect with an extensive background in developing and executing business strategies for the global automotive aftermarket. A subject matter expert on new product development who provides the vision and strategy necessary to lead organizations through all phases, from concept to go-to-market execution. An organized and energetic executive able to add value to any organization by:

- Executing new product development strategies across multiple countries and markets
- Leveraging demonstrated knowledge of branding, advertising, data analysis, and consumer and trade promotions to position new products in desired markets expertly
- Delivering next-level results and service by seamlessly executing creative solutions to improve products/services and increase adoption

KEY SKILLS

Strategic Planning | Brand Management | Cost Savings | Customer Relations | Lifecycle Management | Revenue & Profit Growth | Design & Implementation | e-Commerce | Global Marketing | Business Strategy Development | Go-To-Market Strategies | Budgets | Sales Initiatives | Online Marketing | Social Media

Work History

FIRST BRANDS GROUP

Serves the automotive aftermarket industry with category-leading brands such as TRICO and Anco wipers, Carter and Airtex fuel pumps, ASC water pumps, StrongArm lift supports, Autolite spark plugs and FRAM filters.

EXECUTIVE GROUP DIRECTOR, MARKETING

FEBRUARY 2019 – SEPTEMBER 2020

Managed the \$400M+ maintenance division (wipers and filters) for First Brands Group aftermarket products. Responsible for customer marketing programs and rebranding for the company's portfolio of leading name brand automotive products lines. Managed two direct reports.

- Integrated acquired \$45M competitive wiper company (Anco) into TRICO's product and packaging standards to dramatically increase profitability and sales.
- Pioneered new rubber formulation for best-in-class performance used exclusively on a new ultra-premium line which generated \$14M in new sales.
- Relunched Fram filters into the Automotive Retail market with new exclusive brands. Produced \$10 M in sales the first year.
- Partnered with packaging suppliers to develop industry-leading unique solutions that increased available retail space while substantially saving the company over \$1.5M annually.
- Conducted consumer and trade research on installation issues resulting in a redesign of the current offering with more coherent components and instructions and a completely new \$5M product line.

CROWNE GROUP

A leading manufacturer and distributor of both Aftermarket and OEM component parts for the automotive and other industrial equipment markets.

GLOBAL DIRECTOR OF MARKETING

FEBRUARY 2015 – FEBRUARY 2019

Oversaw marketing activities for the current companies (TRICO, Carter, StrongArm) and four newly acquired companies (Fram, Autolite, Airtex, ASC). Managed seven direct reports.

- Consolidated and standardized global product offering with 11 international manufacturing facilities.
- Executed corporate brand standards globally on packaging, sales literature, and websites.

- Implemented trilingual packaging that eliminated duplicate inventory of over 450 SKUs.
- Developed consumer and trade advertising strategies while managing an \$8M annual budget.

TRICO PRODUCTS CORPORATION

One of the world's largest manufacturers of windshield wiper systems and components

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING

APRIL 1993 – FEBRUARY 2015

Drove corporate & product branding strategy and positioning across all traditional and digital channels. Composed and delivered customer presentations. Determined pricing for all aftermarket accounts and new products. Partnered with advertising agency, printers, and internet companies to bring support materials to market. Managed electronic catalog (ACES) and attribute data (PIES) for the TRICO brand and private labels.

- Determined Aftermarket/OES marketing product strategy and identified new product requirements.
- Implemented the launch of new product lines annually, garnering TRICO the reputation for "First to Market" and increasing multi-million-dollar sales.
- Created and executed definitive consumer and retail account-specific sales promotions.
- Successfully launched all-makes OES programs with non-OEM platform manufacturers.
- Administered the content of the corporate website.

EDUCATION

Master of Business Administration (MBA) | Marketing – The State University of New York at Buffalo
 Bachelor of Science (BS) | Business Administration – The State University of New York at Buffalo

AWARDS

Gold Addy – Direct Marketing (2014)

Mobius Award – Best of Show (1998)

Popular Mechanics Editor's Choice Award - New Product Design and Innovation (2004, 2001)

Summit Creative Awards

Radio Spot [Gold] 2008 TV Spot [Silver] 2008

TV \$50,000 to \$75,000 (2002)

Telly Award –:30 TV (2012)

WB Automotive Communications Awards

Business-to-Consumer Web Site (2012)

Business-to-Consumer Radio Commercial (2006)

Business-to-Business Print Ad Campaign (2005)

PATENT

Windshield Wiper Package (D 686, 912)

TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

MS Word, MS Excel, MS PowerPoint; ACES, PIES, Web Site Development, SEO

KEY ATTRIBUTES

Business Development, Cost Reduction, e-Marketing, Forecasting, Marketing Campaigns, Marketing Support, P&L, Process Improvement, Productivity Improvements, Product Launches, Profit Improvement, Program Development, Program Management, Project Coordination, New Media Marketing, Strategic Growth Planning, Strategic Sourcing, SWOT & Needs Analysis, Testing, Training, Web Development, Team Dynamics, Communication Skills, Vendor Relations, Leadership Development, Organizational Communication, Organizational Development, Relationship Management, Team Building, Team Leadership, Client Relations, Employee Development, Employee Relations