

NewRoads adds Honda to its automotive portfolio



NewRoads Automotive Group is charting another new path.

The Newmarket-based company, which includes Aurora Toyota in their group of automotive brands, recently expanded their portfolio with the purchase of Newmarket Honda.

For nearly 20 years, Newmarket Honda has served a loyal customer following and fostered equally loyal staff team, and it is here that NewRoads' Michael Croxon found a brand and philosophy which dovetailed perfectly into that of his ever-expanding vision.

"This opportunity came about through conversations with Newmarket Honda owner Kevin Pearson over the last three-and-a-half years," says Mr. Croxon. "I indicated to him that when he felt the time was right I would be the logical buyer based on our other holdings in Newmarket. He agreed and he also highlighted the comforts in which he knew our organization would take care of his long-standing employees. That was very important to him.

"We're very fortunate to represent the brands that we do right now. It's what I would consider a very strong portfolio of automotive brands and Honda fits into that family very, very well given their history, their quality, and their customer loyalty. Newmarket Honda is also a very community-based organization, as is NewRoads, in terms of their propensity to give back and it was a natural fit."

It was also a natural fit for day-to-day operations.

In Newmarket Honda, Mr. Croxon found what he describes as a "very well-run operation" that is highly-focused on customer service, a hallmark of NewRoads Automotive Group.

"It checked all the boxes with Honda Canada in terms of performance, whether it be customer satisfaction, sales efficiency, and [other metrics] manufacturers measure their dealers on, not unlike what many of the other NewRoads stores do as well," he says. "The opportunity for improvement admittedly was/is somewhat limited. Integrating them into the larger organization when it comes to our human resources, our customer care centre, I think we'll take what is currently a really good experience being provided by what was Newmarket Honda and make an exceptional experience. It's a lot of small tweaks, but adding up small tweaks can make a material difference.

"One of the challenges is because Newmarket Honda has sold so many cars in the past we have a ton of current customers to serve. One of the challenges they had prior to us buying them was accommodating all of those customers in the service department. Through our facilities, we're going to be able to ease that up a little bit so customers don't have to wait as long to get their Honda serviced because they have other facilities with capacities where they can take some of that work out of the Honda store and migrate it to others [including] some of that pre-inspection work. This will free up space to do what is most important: serving customers."

This focus on serving customers and taking care of employees is a shared standard Mr. Croxon says was set at Newmarket Honda by Mr. Pearson. It is this shared 'compassion for people' that brought the two businesses together and will maintain its standards for years to come.

'You don't get a high level of employee engagement without having a compassion for people. It starts there,' says Mr. Croxon.

With the latest acquisition, NewRoads Automotive Group is yet another kilometer towards their ultimate goal.

'We want to be, if we're not already, the dominant automotive brand in the Northern 905,' says Mr. Croxon. 'Newmarket is our home and we now have six stores in Newmarket, one in Aurora, and one in North Richmond Hill.'

By Brock Weir
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