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OUTSTANDING IN HIS FIELD

Roger Pitchford
K&M's Commercial Tire Dealer of the Year Award

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COMMERCIAL TIRE DEALER OF THE YEAR

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Congratulations to Roger Pitchford and the entire Roger's Tire Service of Richwood, Ohio family on your selection as the winner of the 2026 Mr. Tire / Big 3 Tire Commercial Tire Dealer of the Year!

As an ideal representative of our industry, you are being presented with this award, which is sponsored and supported by BKT Tire. You and your team were selected for this recognition based on several notable factors: Your dedication to providing a fair deal to everyone, your pledge to make sure every customer has an enjoyable experience, and your trustworthy and reliable service. Congratulations to everyone at Roger's Tire Service on behalf of everyone at K&M Tire.

The hard work and dedication by you and your team is appreciated and noticed. Considering the many great dealers within the Mr. Tire and Big 3 Tire programs, choosing a winner for the 2026 Mr. Tire / Big 3 Tire Commercial Tire Dealer of the Year was a difficult decision. Your team's pursuit of excellence helped propel you to the lead.

We are honored to be doing business with such an exceptional family-owned and operated company! Roger's Tire Service of Richwood, Ohio you are among the Best of the Best, and are worthy of the honor of being the 2026 Mr. Tire / Big 3 Tire Commercial Tire Dealer of the Year!

Sincerely,



Ken Langhals
CEO
K&M Tire, Inc.



Cheryl Gossard
President
K&M Tire, Inc.

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K&M TIRE

OUTSTANDING IN HIS FIELD

In just four years, Roger Pitchford turned his farm tire dealership into a multi-million-dollar business. How he did it earned him K&M's Commercial Tire Dealer of the Year Award.

BY BOB ULRICH



CLOSE TO 80% OF THE ACREAGE IN UNION COUNTY, OHIO, is dedicated to farming. So is Roger's Tire Service, a tire dealership based near Richwood, Ohio.

"We still have a Richwood address, but my shop is eight miles from Richwood," says owner Roger Pitchford. "We're eight miles from everything. We're in the middle of nowhere."

That doesn't keep Roger's Tire Service from "taking care of Union County," as the dealership's website says.

Jeff Brooks, outside sales/commercial specialist for K&M Tire Inc., the dealership's main tire supplier, says Union County "is like a lot of counties in western Ohio. It's predominately a farming community, which consists of miles of corn and soybean fields that are its primary source of existence.



"Unlike the counties further south and east, it consists of few natural gas wells and little to no livestock — and no highly populated cities."

Pitchford also takes care of customers in Hardin and Logan Counties to the west and Marion and Delaware Counties to the east. All four counties are adjacent to Union County.

"We also have customer in Circleville, Ohio, in Pickaway County — two counties away," says Pitchford.

In September 2021, he decided to open his own business after working more than three decades at a John Deere dealership in Richwood. He rented a 40-foot by 80-foot building from a grain farmer who used it to maintain his farm equipment.

"It's nothing special," says Pitchford. "It's just an old pole barn that has ventilation and heat and a concrete floor."

He also bought a one-ton dually when he started and began changing and repairing tires for farmers and anyone else who was willing to drive to his out-of-the-way shop.

Pitchford "had 35 years of tire experience and a determination and positive attitude that he could make a million dollars or more if he put in enough hours," says Brooks. "He did put in those hours, working sun-up to 'dark-thirty' seven days a week for the first couple of years." ("Dark-thirty" is military slang for an "unspecified hour in the early morning before the sun has risen," according to The Free Dictionary website).

He put that experience to good use. Even his accountant was surprised by Pitchford's early results.

Over time, he added signage, two service trucks, tire changing equipment and two full-time service employees.

Pitchford considers himself to be an ag tire dealer. "About 80% of our business comes through farms, whether it be ag tires, car tires, light truck tires, semi tires ... we do everything for the farmers," he says. "Without our local farmers — as big as the area we've got to take care of is — I would not be doing what I'm doing."

He says the key to his success is customer service. "It doesn't matter if they're buying $1,000 worth of tires or $100 worth of tires, the difference is the experience you give customers. Customer service is what has made us what we are — that and our relationship with our customers."

IN THE BEGINNING

"When I first got out of high school, I worked for a John Deere dealer, Parrott Implement, in Richwood," says Pitchford. "It was a family-



"About 80% of our business comes through farms, whether it be ag tires, car tires, light truck tires, semi tires ... we do everything for the farmers," says Pitchford.



"There are a whole lot of places for people to buy tires," says Pitchford. "They don't have to buy from us. So it is up to use to give them a reason to do that."



"Customer service is what has made us what we are," says Pitchford.



Mack Plotner drives a tire into the shop to get a rusted wheel replaced. K&M Tire Inc. supplied the new rim.





Garrett Miller loads a size 14.9x24 BKT rear combine tire onto his service truck.

owned business. We sold car tires, pickup truck tires, ag tires and semi tires. Seventy-five percent of the people in our hometown had no idea we sold car and truck tires. They thought we handled strictly ag tires.

"I worked for the Parrott family for almost 35 years. The first 15, I worked in the tire shop. I was basically a tire technician. One of the guys in the shop told me what to do and I did it. I had a ball.

"The last 20 years, I was actually the tech and the guy who sold the tires. I ran the tire shop with a couple of other guys and did everything I do now."

Pitchford says he couldn't have been treated any better while the Parrott family owned the company. That's why he says he didn't go out on his own sooner. "I didn't need to because of the way the Parrott family treated me."

He left when another company acquired Parrott Implement.

"I was almost 55 years old. I decided to take two to three months off work and enjoy life and then go to the local Honda manufacturing plant or Scott's Lawn Care facility and get into the maintenance program, put my 10 years in, shove all my money in a 401(k) and be done.

"The farmers were the ones to convince me to do what I'm doing now. I still do all the work for the same people I dealt with at Parrott's."

With his own place ready to open – "right in the middle of COVID-19!" he says – Pitchford thought he knew the business side inside and out.

"When I started on my own, I thought I had everything figured out. I knew how to sell tires, I knew how to change tires, I knew how long it was going to take to do a job. And then all of a sudden, you get out in the real world and realize you don't know half of what you think you do.

"Anything that needed to be done paperwork-wise at Parrott's I handled. I did my own invoicing and put inventory information into the computer.

"But as far as paying the taxes and keeping everything straight, the women up front took care of all that. I didn't have to worry about it. Now that I'm on my own, I realize what they actually did and I'm like, 'Wow!'"

THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN

Even before he opened the doors of Roger's Tire Service, Pitchford looked to his sons, Spencer and Alex, for help.

"When I found the building we use now was going to be available, I sat down with my sons and came up with a game plan. We figured out how much each one of us could afford to invest in the beginning and that's how we started our company."

At first, Pitchford ran the operation by himself and worked seven days a week "because I had to." His sons would volunteer their time if he needed their help.

"They both have their own companies, but I still consider them a major part of our business. If it wasn't for their input in the beginning, I wouldn't be able to do what I do. And if we get to the point where I really need help, either one of those two will free up the time to get over here to help us.

"It's Roger's Tire Service, but it's our business."

The first full-time employee Pitchford hired had worked for him at Parrott Implement.

"The guy who has been with me the longest is Garrett Miller," says Pitchford. "Garrett first worked for me when he was in high school. I've known him since he was a little kid.

"When I first came out here in 2021, Garrett was my first call. Even though Garrett had a full-time job at that time, he would still come in and work for me in the evenings or Saturday mornings."

Pitchford says Miller is his main service tech. Miller normally drives the company's new Dodge 5500, which features a crane and a regular tire bed on it.

His other full-time employee, Tyler Krebehenne, "started working for me when he was a sophomore in high school. He wasn't always available because he participated in high school sports. But any hours Tyler could work, he would work.

"He just graduated, so he's in his first year of full-time work. Tyler's usually in the shop with me, but also runs the other truck when

Rockin' around the clock

'IT'S ALL ABOUT THE CUSTOMER,' SAYS PITCHFORD

The posted hours at Roger's Tire Service are not set in stone. That's because farmers follow their own hours.

Roger's Tire Service, located eight miles from Richwood, Ohio, "in the middle of nowhere," according to owner Roger Pitchford, is open six days a week. On the company's website, the hours are as follows: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, 8 a.m. to noon and on Sunday, closed.

"Whether it's seven in the morning or whenever, we just make sure people are taken care of," he says. "Basically, in the spring and in the fall during planting season and harvest season, you understand you have to do a little bit more in that time span."

What if a customer calls and needs help after-hours or on a Sunday? "My guys work hard enough during the week that in the evenings and on weekends, I'm the one in the truck," says Pitchford. "So I go do it."

Does that mean he's on-call 24/7? "Well, we don't advertise that, but yes," says Pitchford.



K&M Tire Inc., Roger's Tire Service's main supplier, "is a phenomenal company," says Pitchford.


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necessary. Anybody who works for me can take either of the service trucks out and do the job."

Mack Plotner worked for Roger's Tire Service part-time when he was in high school, then went off to college. He is back working for Pitchford part-time.

"I am blessed that this is the place they all want to be," says Pitchford. "They are very well- compensated for their time and get paid vacations, but I still think the key is everybody in our building gets along. Everybody has a good time."

The seventh employee is Pitchford's girlfriend, Lauri Pacha, who was his high school sweetheart. After his divorce, they reconnected.

"I would not be able to do what we do without her, either," he says. "She deals with the accountant and the tax side of the business. She makes sure the bills are paid and the money gets to the bank."

She also lets him know if a customer is too far behind in paying his or her bill. "She has no trouble making sure there's something in plain sight, so I get reminded, 'Hey, you need to call this guy,'" says Pitchford.

"If it wasn't for my two boys, the three people who work for us and Lauri, we could not do what we do today. It's that simple. Any business without people is never going to be successful."

DEFINING CUSTOMER SERVICE

"Customer service is everything," says Pitchford. "There are a whole lot of places for people to buy tires. They don't have to buy them from us. So it is up to us to give them a reason to do that."

Those reasons are varied:

Going the extra mile. Roger's Tire Service will drive to any farm within two hours of the shop. "If a customer is willing to pay the bill, we'll go pretty much anywhere." That also includes servicing tractor-trailers downed on the highway.

Time and travel. During the week, the dealership is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. But Pitchford considers that more of a guide. "Let's say we're going to Circleville in the morning. We'll make sure the service truck is set up the night before, so Garrett can be on his way at 6:30 or 7:00 the next morning." Exceptions also are made for after-hours and Sunday calls when necessary. "There are times where you're out in the field doing a call at three o'clock and something doesn't go right," says Miller. "We stay out there until we get the job done and get the farmer up and going." (see "Rockin' around the clock," page 8.)



If all goes well, Roger's Tire Service will move into a new building no later than next fall.

In-shop vehicle service. Time is of the essence when customers drive their cars — or ag tractors, for that matter — to Roger's Tire Service. "We strictly do tire work," says Pitchford. "Our average time to service a car, in and out, is less than 30 minutes." That includes removing the wheels and tires from the car, putting new tires on, replacing old valve stems with new ones and making sure the tire pressure monitoring system works "All the tires are also mounted and balanced. And we torque the lug nuts by hand." Commercial tires also are replaced with speed and accuracy.

As for inventory, Pitchford keeps some of the more popular consumer and medium truck tire sizes on hand, plus some smaller farm implement sizes ranging from 7.60-15 to 12.5L-16 "because you don't know what the day's going to bring."

The larger ag tire sizes are a different story. "We let the wholesalers carry them for us. We are very lucky. K&M will come to my shop twice a day" from its warehouse in Columbus, Ohio.

A local Tech tire repair distributor visits Roger's Tire Service once a month to replenish the inventory of patches, glues and rubber cleaners.

"I started out with the Tech brand 39 years ago," says Pitchford. "I'm comfortable with their products. They are not the least expensive and there are probably some materials out there (that are) way more cost-effective, but if you find something that works and it isn't broken, you don't fix it."

WHOLESALE SUPPORT

Pitchford's main ag tire brands are Firestone, BKT and Alliance. He also sells Firestone, Roadmaster, Supercargo and Ironhead medium truck tires and Mastercraft, Toyo, Firestone, Continental, Hankook, Yokohama, Falken and Ironhead consumer tires. Ironhead is his tier-three, entry-level passenger and truck tire brand.

"I would say if you take 100% of the tires that we buy and resell, K&M represents probably 65% of that. They are a phenomenal company. I have dealt with K&M now for 30 years and I'm comfortable with everything they do there.

"They have everything from the inner tubes that I want to the commercial tires that we need and they take great care of us. We cannot complain."

Larry Vankannel, outside sales rep in Ohio for K&M Tire, says when Pitchford worked at Parrott Implement, his ag tire purchases were "not nearly at the volume he currently buys.

"Upon launching out on his own in 2021, his volume in ag, OTR, commercial truck, light truck, passenger and lawn and garden (tires) has steadily increased year-over-year. His volume increased even more when we put him on two times a day delivery."

As a result of its volume, Roger's Tire Service is a certified Big 3 Tire dealership. Big 3 is one of K&M's two dealer programs, along with Mr. Tire — "same program, different name, depending on the state," says Vankannel.

Roger's Tire Service not only takes full advantage of Big 3 Tire's volume bonus programs, but also K&M's "national account and government processing" programs and free transfer on any tire policy, he adds

Roger's Tire Service is on the following manufacturers' PLT programs through K&M: Mastercraft Century, Yokohama Advantage, Hankook One, Kumho Fuel and Falken Fanatic. It is also a Firestone Certified Ag

Dealer and BKT Growing Together Associate Dealer.

WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

If all goes well, Pitchford will move Roger's Tire Service to a new, greenfield building on a state route no later than next fall. "We bought just under nine acres about 20 minutes from here. It used to be a horse farm. As soon as we can get everything on board with Union County, we'll build it."

Pitchford says Union County has "very strict" laws on commercial buildings. "I've had houses built before, but as far as how much extra it entails, I never imagined what we would have to deal with to build a commercial tire shop!

"We've already gone through the process of buying the land and getting the conditional use designation on the property changed, so I can use the building as a tire shop," he says. "And I've got my commercial driveway approved.

"Now we have to get all the other stuff approved from Union County. That's not exactly the easiest task in the world. We did hire a civil engineering company called Choice One to take care of all the other stuff we need done, like the topographical water reports. They are going to be the ones to focus on everything, so I can just keep doing the work I do, now and in the future. It's super exciting!

"Hopefully by springtime, we will be in position to get the building under construction. Our goal is to be in sometime next summer or fall."

Pitchford knows that with greater size comes greater responsibility. He's preparing to ramp up his company's marketing efforts. For example, the company's website (rogerstireservice.squarespace.com) is pretty bare bones, he notes.

"The website is there because I needed to get on Google, so people could find me easier. I'm eight miles from everybody, so the easiest thing to do was get a presence on Google so somebody could bring us up on the internet, hit the button and get directions on how to get to my shop.

"When we get to our new building, we will more than likely end up hiring a company to do our marketing. And we definitely are going to have to hire more people.

"When I started, people said, 'Location, location, location — this is never going to work!' But here we are, four years later. And the new building will be a game-changer for us." ■

A unique perspective

A Q&A WITH K&M TIRE INC.'S JEFF BROOKS

Jeff Brooks is an outside sales/commercial specialist for K&M Tire Inc., Roger's Tire Service's main tire supplier. When asked, "Is there anything that you would consider unique about Roger Pitchford and his operation, Roger's Tire Service?," Brooks replied that "Roger is unique in that during the day he considers himself a full-time employee and works side-by-side doing the same job as his employees, busting his knuckles and getting his hands dirty, teaching and setting the example.

"After the shop closes, he then goes into owner mode and does his office duties, which often involve late nights and early mornings. On a regular basis, he must jump in his truck and travel the lonely country roads, dodging deer along the way into town, to make the bank deposits – a must to ensure the business stays running smoothly."

Community involvement

ROGER PITCHFORD BELIEVES IN GIVING BACK

Roger Pitchford, owner of Roger's Tire Service in Richwood, Ohio, is very involved in community activities. He says he has been blessed and wants to give back. That is especially true when children are the beneficiaries.

"We make donations to each of the schools (in town). Anything they do athletic-wise, we sponsor it."

Roger's Tire Service also sponsors the Richwood Independent Fair and is a Diamond Level Sponsor of the Union County Fair "This year, we spent money supporting five or six county fairs," says Pitchford. "We're always the highest-level sponsor.

Pitchford and his namesake company also purchased a scoreboard for a local school. "In a small community, everybody has to pitch in."



Roger's Tire Service carries a wide range of tire brands.



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