



**SPECIALTY EQUIPMENT MARKET ASSOCIATION**

**DISTRIBUTOR RETAILER  
CANDIDACY QUESTIONNAIRE  
2023-2024 ELECTION YEAR**

**TED WENTZ, *Incumbent*  
CEO, Quadratec**

**Part 1 – Personal/Professional History**

1. Please provide a history of your professional background and education (including professional development). Feel free to attach your résumé and/or bio. Describe the specifics of your current job responsibilities:

I am the CEO of Quadratec, one of the largest and most well-known off-road parts and accessories retailers/distributors. I am ultimately responsible for the entire organization, including our strategic direction, earnings growth and strength of our brand. Prior to my current role, I was the president/CEO of FireCRAFT Inc., a retailer/distributor of outdoor cooking equipment. Earlier in my career, I worked for Quadratec and partook in their leadership development program with a focus on strategy, marketing, customer service and fulfillment. While working for Toyota Motor Sales' Marketing Department, I gained valuable OEM experience. Finally, while serving our nation at the Department of Homeland Security, I learned the strategies and tactics needed to be successful on Capitol Hill's complex battleground. I hold an undergraduate degree from the University of Virginia and an MBA from the University of North Carolina's Kenan Flagler Business School with concentrations in marketing and entrepreneurship.

2. Indicate your historic and/or current involvement with automotive industry initiatives specifically, as well as other professional and philanthropic associations, societies, and organizations you have been actively involved in. Please be specific about other boards (if any) on which you have served or are currently serving:

Today I proudly serve on the SEMA Board of Directors as a distributor/retailer. Over my three-year term, I have served on the Board Nomination Selection Committee, chaired the Emissions Working Group Task Force, co-chaired the Launchpad Working Group, served as the Board Liaison to SEMA's Truck and Off-Road Alliance (TORA) and Future Leaders Network (FLN), and been an active member in a variety of Board initiatives, including representing the Board in our recent recruiting efforts for the senior vice president of public and government affairs.

I also serve on the University of North Carolina Family Enterprise Center's Board and support the Board on strategic issues, leadership selection and marketing advancements. Additionally, I

am fortunate to be an active member of the Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) and BMW Car Club of America (CCA) racing both open-cockpit and closed-cockpit cars. As CEO of Quadratic, I enthusiastically support and participate in the Tread Lightly! Initiative focused on promoting responsible recreation through stewardship, education and communication.

As a representative of the Department of Homeland Security, I worked closely with the Department of Transportation on a variety of automotive security and cross-border initiatives. Lastly, I am an active member of the University of Virginia and University of North Carolina Alumnae Associations.

Time is my most cherished commodity and, thus, I have given this nomination a great deal of consideration. As a current Board member, I recognize and respect the time commitment the election and serving on the Board would require. As such, I can confidently confirm that I can fully commit to this opportunity and give it the effort it deserves.

3. Please highlight specific career accomplishments including, but not limited to, patents received, product innovations, awards and recognitions, publications, marketing or business programs, presentation to business and/or industry symposiums. Share any and all significant or notable accomplishments:

In 2022, I was honored to earn a place on the Philadelphia Titan 100, recognizing me as one of the top 100 executives in the Philadelphia area. I currently guest lecture at the University of North Carolina's MBA and undergraduate business programs on the topics of entrepreneurship, family business, leadership, strategy and marketing. At Quadratic, I lead the teams responsible for designing and developing hundreds of best-selling, off-road products. I also lead the teams tasked with publishing a Jeep parts and accessories catalog with a circulation larger than all other Jeep publications combined. In graduate school, I was surrounded by talented future business leaders and yet still earned the 2008 Leadership Award as voted by my classmates.

4. Please mark each of the skill categories where you believe you possess a level of expertise:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motor Sports/Racing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Distribution/Logistics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vehicle Shows/Auctions/Exhibitions
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supply Chain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Financial Planning/Management
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accounting
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vehicular/Product Design/Innovation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Resources Management
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Product Management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Business Management/ Development
<input type="checkbox"/> OEM Design/Technology	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sales
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brand Management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Business Technology
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advertising	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Data Management
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marketing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Internet Utilization
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategic Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify):
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Relations	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Crisis Management	_____

Regulatory Compliance  
 Legislative/Lobbying

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## Part 2 – Personal/Professional Attributes

5. What are your specific areas of expertise? What unique skills or perspective do you think you could bring to the leadership of SEMA? What business or life experience do you have that prepares you to help shape the direction of the industry? What industry issues are you particularly passionate about?

SEMA needs leadership that understands our industry's needs, how to communicate those needs to federal, state and local governments, and how to impact real change. I am the rare leader in the automotive aftermarket industry with experience in both the public and private sectors who is capable of accomplishing these goals. I speak the languages of both profit and electoral public opinion. I have developed desirable automotive accessories and also navigated stakeholders through the federal rulemaking process. I am as comfortable discussing gear ratios as I am debating contentious policy and its economic impact at a Capitol Hill hearing. During my time on the Board, I believe I have been a powerful voice working on issues with our representatives in Washington, leading the discussion on political strategy, and supporting staff's effort to modernize our teams in Washington and Sacramento.

Today, the automotive aftermarket faces massive challenges that are both complex and changing, and we are evolving SEMA to meet these challenges. I believe I have been an engaged, open-minded and dedicated voice in the development and implementation of that evolution. However, the work is not done and neither am I. The three most notable of these issues are the increasing EPA and CARB emissions rhetoric and action, the precarious position of the OEM and SEMA partnership, and the importance of bolstering the value-based relationship between SEMA and its members. Addressing these issues will require the unique experience, knowledge and willingness that I would bring to the slate.

6. What would you say is/are your most notable achievement(s) to this point in your career? What are you most proud of?

My most notable achievement is the diversity of my leadership victories. I have successfully led organizations in the public, private and volunteer sectors, in multiple markets in the private sector, and across a variety of team sizes. I believe the diversity of these achievements underscores my ability to adapt to an array of challenges and requirements while redefining and enjoying victory. Many can win once but my teams have won many times on a variety of playing fields.

I am most proud of being a part of a multi-generation family business. The unique challenges and rewards of family businesses are what makes these types of organizations so special. In reality, I began training for my current role as CEO when I was a young boy working on vintage British sports cars and Jeeps with my father. He taught me about cars,

tools, driving, business and how to mix all those things together. Working in a family business is never easy, but I am blessed to have such an opportunity.

### **Part 3 – Industry Perspective**

7. What do you consider to be the top opportunities or threats facing the specialty parts aftermarket over the next five years? Try to be specific to industry trends. You may comment on advancement of federal regulations and macroeconomic issues (inflation, unemployment, health care, etc.) but only if they are relevant to your perspective on industry issues.

The aftermarket industry has some exciting opportunities we should stand ready to embrace such as expanding the world-famous SEMA Show, stopping regulatory overreach impacting our members, and embracing vehicle electrification.

The SEMA Show is our industry's most powerful asset. It showcases our wide-ranging capabilities, proves how important cars still are in our society, and provides an invaluable campus for our members to grow their businesses. However, there is so much more the Show can do. We must find ways to expand the Show's reach by offering options for consumers to engage and participate in the greatest "car week" in the world. At the same time, we must become extremely customer-focused to ensure those customers feel the SEMA Show is a must-attend event. Our customers are our members, exhibitors and media and we should understand all their work-related needs. We must ask questions well beyond how they feel about our Show and what the Show should include. We must also understand their seemingly unrelated business needs and improve our show by satisfying those needs.

SEMA is so much more than just the Show. Most importantly, we are the lead representative for our industry in both Washington, D.C., and Sacramento. Today, that role is more important than ever because of the overwhelming regulatory overreach we must fight. Be it emissions or right to modify, SEMA needs to expand and sharpen our ability to defend ourselves on the political and public affairs battlefield.

The rapid expansion of electric vehicles can certainly be seen as a threat, but it also creates new categories of aftermarket products and services while introducing vehicle owners to the aftermarket who do not even know we exist today. SEMA should become a recognized leader in the world of electric vehicles while balancing the needs of our members who depend on internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles. There is no reason why we cannot service and support both the old and the new.

8. Of the issues you identify above, which ONE concerns you the most as to how it will impact the industry's future? What would you do to initiate change to either expedite a positive outcome or prevent a potential disaster?

I believe the most concerning threat to our industry is federal and state regulatory overreach. Often, new laws and rules are ill-informed and are driven by one-sided ideologists. Imbalanced regulations usually create massive collateral damage, in this case handcuffing our industry's ability to create jobs, grow small businesses and ultimately drive

economic growth.

Should our government mandate electric powertrains over other technologies, we will enter a period of reduced innovation, unnaturally decaying demand and increased costs. Preventing our industry from developing parts and accessories gives OEs a monopolistic grip on modifying cars. Consumers want choice and so do our members. SEMA must work with our elected leaders in Washington to help them understand the importance of freedom and choice. These basic American rights foster new technologies, ideas and products that improve the air we breathe, water we drink and economy we depend on much faster than poorly constructed regulations. SEMA can do this by expanding our team in Washington and Sacramento and empowering them to not only lobby but share our story in every elected official's back yard. America is behind SEMA, and we have to make sure our government knows and respects this fact.

#### **Part 4 – Association Specific Observations**

9. Of the 9 [SEMA Strategic Priorities](#) the SEMA Board and the association are focused on, which 2 do you think are the most critical and what can you do to contribute to the success of these initiatives?

In today's environment, I would argue that regulatory issues (non-emissions) and trade shows (improving and evolving) are the two most critical strategic priorities and that I am uniquely qualified to support the Board's efforts to achieve them.

Emissions-related government overreach impacts a sizable number of SEMA members and a large segment of our industry; however, non-emissions overreach could harm our entire industry. If future regulations prevent us from modifying lights, tires, bumpers, wheels, suspensions and a host of other categories, we all suffer. Even worse, these regulations would arrive disguised in the false cloak of improving safety. Advancing these non-emissions regulatory issues will ultimately require a blend of business model flexibility, government lobbying and public relations action. As a proven leader in both the private and public sectors, I have the unique experiences and qualifications to support our Board's initiatives in all these areas.

The best trade show in the world, the SEMA Show, can get even better. Today, we host the greatest trade show in the world. However, the majority of automotive enthusiasts can only engage with the Show through social media and stories. Starting with SEMA Fest, we can change that and open the SEMA Show experience to everyone. But we must do so while not contracting, but instead expanding, member businesses opportunities to grow their companies at the Show. My extensive event marketing experience in both the OE and aftermarket worlds gives me the perspective a Board member needs to strike this balance between supporting our member companies and engaging the automotive enthusiast public at large.

10. As a SEMA Board member, how do you feel you would be uniquely qualified to help address the issues you identified above?

My unique career path has qualified and prepared me to take on legislators at the federal, state and local levels. The battles involving emissions regulations and the right to modify complex and highly regulated automobiles will be fought in Washington, D.C., and in state capitols across the country. As a manager at the Department of Homeland Security, I spent countless hours negotiating with lobbyists regarding new and pending legislation, preparing for hearings on Capitol Hill, and navigating complex economic impact studies all while balancing public perception and the need to get elected or reelected. After 9/11, I was tasked to redesign and launch the system responsible for preventing any additional terrorists from receiving flight training in the United States. Today, that system is still protecting our skies and is an example of my public-sector prowess.

As an acting SEMA Board member, I have been an enthusiastic contributor to our mission to expand and improve the SEMA Show. Those efforts include the post-COVID recovery for the SEMA Show, expanding the Show's general public access on Friday, and launching SEMA Fest. These are major and successful projects but they are also incomplete. I am fortunate to understand why and how SEMA tackled these initiatives and what needs to happen to finish them. If given the opportunity to join the Board for another three years, I would relish the challenge of completing those projects and finish the job I helped start.

I would encourage the selection committee and our voting membership to discuss my historical performance on the Board with current and past Board members. In many ways, they can give you the best picture of what I brought to the Board over the last three years and the value I could add in the future.

11. What industry trends or opportunities is SEMA the association and the SEMA Show missing out on currently?

SEMA has started to embrace new-vehicle technologies, but we must do more. The future may be dominated by gasoline-, electric- or hydrogen-powered automobiles, and our industry should be ready for all three. Electric-vehicle growth is impressive; however, there are serious infrastructure issues that may not be surmountable and could stunt electric vehicle adoption. At the same time, governments and consumers will continue to demand non-fossil fuel vehicles, especially in Europe and Asia. Does this mean hydrogen fuel-cell technology is the next logical step? Maybe, and I do not pretend to know what will happen. Either way, SEMA does not need to make major strategic adjustments or investments related to hydrogen power, but we should discuss what those adjustments and investments would be should hydrogen become popular.

SEMA must encourage a strong electric-vehicle aftermarket of parts and accessories. I love internal combustion motors. To me, the song of a well-tuned V8 is a work of art. That does not mean that I, nor my business, can ignore the growth of electric automobiles. This new segment will soon include practical everyday vehicles, tough off-road battle wagons and heart-stopping exotic speedsters. SEMA and our Board must prepare our members to develop parts and accessories for all of these segments. We should have specific awards for electric aftermarket parts, a Battle of the Builders electric category, an electric-specific scholarship and more.

At the same time, our industry faces major challenges, including an influx of counterfeit aftermarket goods, cost pressures due to the ongoing trade dispute, increasing new-vehicle complexity, and the potential of reduced youth engagement. As an industry we cannot change the external factors fueling some of these threats, but we must develop strategies to address each of them. The current trade disputes increase supply-chain uncertainty and expense but we must establish new profitable networks both domestically and abroad.

As the CEO of Quadratec, I sit on the front lines of our industry's battle against counterfeit goods and understand what it takes to grow sales in this newly challenging environment. At Quadratec, we sell hundreds of brands of off-road parts and accessories to end consumers, retail stores and installers. We work in partnership with those brands to identify, attack and outmaneuver counterfeiters. We also sell our own brands and face these same challenges as we develop and innovate our own products. This means I have been able to crowdsource a tool belt of strategies and tactics to successfully tackle the counterfeit challenge and am ready to help our Board supercharge its ability to do the same.

12. How about its strengths?

SEMA's greatest strength is its people who fuel the passion of the automotive aftermarket and make this the most fun industry in America. From our Board, to our staff, and to our members, we are blessed with wonderful people spreading an infectious love for what we do.

These people create our second greatest strength: our ability to generate opportunity. Nearly everything SEMA does creates new, innovative and meaningful opportunities for our members, customers and partners. The shining star of this opportunity is the SEMA Show. No trade show brings old and new business partners into one place and allows them to share their ideas, products, strategies and passion quite like the SEMA Show. Without this Show, the automotive aftermarket would not be what it is today.

Outside of our marquee event, SEMA keeps the opportunity faucet wide open. We provide opportunity for new enthusiasts to enter our industry and launch their careers with SEMA Launch Pad, Battle of the Builders and the many offerings of SEMA Education. We recognize high performers in the industry and open new doors for them by showcasing their capability to our entire membership with awards like the SEMA Person of the Year, the Hall of Fame, the Stephen B. McDonald Legislator of the Year, and the many vehicle awards we present every year. Our SEMA Marketing Data Program guides our member executives and managers toward the next great opportunity with insights that most small companies could not afford. Lastly, SEMA fights the sometimes frightening outside forces that threaten our industry and in doing so keeps new and exciting opportunities coming our way.

13. If you were to get elected to the Board of Directors, what topics or issues will you spend your time focusing on and how will you gain support?

I would focus on the issues highlighted in my previous responses: expanding and improving the SEMA Show and fortifying our efforts in Washington, D.C., and Sacramento. My

strength as a candidate for the Board is my history as a change manager and consensus builder in both for-profit and volunteer organizations.

As CEO of Quadratec, I run one of our industry's long-time leaders in innovation and change management. Our company has undergone a tremendous amount of change throughout our 30+ year history. I have managed a great deal of that successful adaptation and would bring that experience to my second term on the Board.

SEMA is a large volunteer-powered organization and understanding how to move us forward requires leadership with broad and relevant experience. My background of board membership in organizations ranging from SEMA itself, to the university setting, to local little leagues brings an understanding of what works and does not work when moving volunteer and non-profit organizations forward. These special organizations require a great mastery of leadership through teamwork and influencing. The diversity of my leadership experience speaks to my ability to thrive in such an environment.

### **Part 5 – About You**

14. Questionnaires can be very limiting. In the space below, share with us anything we didn't ask that you believe will help the Nominating Committee develop a better understanding of you as a candidate:

I am lucky to run a large family business; however, the greatest challenge to all family businesses is to remember that family comes first. Without family, there is no business. My father, mother, sister and I all work together to abide by this fragile fact. As we do, our family bleeds into our business. Quadratec's amazing success story is as much about the Wentz family as it is off-road parts and accessories. We took frightening risks, worked hard, enjoyed our wins and survived our losses with my father and mother leading the way. We have lived the true American Dream. Our family now extends well beyond those with our last name and includes all the employees and partners who helped us get where we are today. I humbly hope that serving on the SEMA Board would help me to repay them all.

You can find me many weekends and evenings coaching my two boys' sports teams and volunteering on the boards and committees of the leagues in which they play. My sons' innocence, energy and natural compassion inspires me, and I believe I learn more from them than they do from me.

15. Why do you want to volunteer to be a SEMA Board member?

While I am proud of my leadership qualifications and credentials, at my core I am a father, husband, son, brother, volunteer and passionate enthusiast who wants to give back. I am an extremely fortunate person and I owe so much to my family, SEMA and this industry that has given me everything. Being a SEMA Board member is my chance to return the favor, and I have cherished my last three years on the Board.