



Contact: Cynthia Cates

cynthia@servnetauctions.com

916.813.9650

For Immediate Release: 7/20/17

Bruce Beam Returns to DAA/OKC with Experience Gained on Both Sides of the Auction Block

Bruce Beam has returned to Dealers Auto Auction of Oklahoma City (DAA/OKC) as the auction's general manager, armed with the experience he has gained from working both sides of the auction block. Beam held the post of general manager when he left DAA/OKC in 2012 to work for Express Credit Auto, the largest buy here-pay here operation in Oklahoma.

Beam's return to the auction in April 2017 was hailed by auction staff and customers alike, all of whom will reap the benefits of his five-year stint in the retail side of the vehicle industry, which has left him wiser and better able to build on the culture of superior service that sets DAA/OKC apart from the competition.

Returning to DAA/OKC is quite literally a return to the family business for Beam. DAA Oklahoma City's owner, Smith, is Beam's father-in-law, and Beam's wife, Nicki, continues to work at the auction as Controller.

"The pull of family is strong, and I decided it was time to return to DAA/OKC," Beam said. "I am delighted to be back. I love the auction industry, and consider it an honor to serve as the general manager at a facility that is both a member of the NAAA and the ServNet auction group."

"Being a member of ServNet is a key part of our access to National Accounts through exposure at the corporate level and the many industry functions that ServNet coordinates throughout the year," explains Beam, adding that DAA/OKC has been a member of the ServNet auction group since 2004. "There is also tremendous value in being able to benchmark DAA/OKC's metrics against 20 of the top Independent auctions in the country, as well as having access to each of those auction owners who have decades of experience in the industry."



*Bruce Beam
General Manager
DAA/OKC*

“The ServNet auction owners and executive team received the news that Bruce Beam had returned to DAA/OKC with great enthusiasm,” says Kevin Brown, ServNet’s president, who notes that Beam had previously served as ServNet’s treasurer. “We have great respect for him, and admire his knowledge and experience. We have all benefited from his work on behalf of ServNet in the past, and look forward to renewing our collaboration with him.”

Beam got his start in the auction business shortly after he graduated from Kansas State University. He responded to an ad for an officer manager at DAA/OKC, and owner Gary Smith hired him in 1992. Beam became assistant general manager to Smith in 1994, and was promoted to general manager in 1998, helping to steer the auction through a time of change.

“When I first got to the auction in 1992, we were moving about 45,000 cars through the lanes,” Beam remembers. “By 2004-2005, our volume had doubled, and we were processing nearly 97,000 vehicles with Ford, General Motors and other factory and off-lease sales.”

Consolidation and technology reduced those kinds of numbers, and the auction adjusted.

“We obviously had to do some restructuring, and we had to adjust to the changes in the industry,” Beam said. “So we worked at improving our technology and focused on doubling our technology business. “

Beam left the auction in 2012 to do consulting work when he was approached by Express Credit Auto, the largest buy here-pay here dealership in Oklahoma with five locations.

“When I worked for Express Credit Auto, I had the opportunity to experience the auction business from the other side of the auction block, as I attended several live auctions every week,” said Beam. He notes that during his time with Express Auto Credit he purchased vehicles at over 35 different Manheim, ADESA, and independent online auctions in addition to hitting 5 live sales every week.

Buying at auction, rather than serving as the facilitator of sales between consignor and buyer, gave Beam new insights into auction business.

“During my first year with the company, we purchased 7,000 vehicles, so it was inevitable that a purchase would need arbitration. The number of arbitrations were low, perhaps just 20 that year, but it opened my eyes to what a dealer has to experience during the arbitration process.”

With that many vehicles in its portfolio, Express Credit Auto had to remarket its repossessions, and Beam took on responsibilities as the auction rep at auctions in Tulsa, Okla.

“The one thing I learned about selling cars at auction is that you have to represent them in the lanes,” Beam said. “You just have to be there.”

Beam said he learned that what sets an auction apart from its competitors in the marketplace boils down to customer service.

“Unless fees are off the charts, dealers will go where they are treated well, where customer service is readily apparent, and where someone is always available to take care of problem,” he

said. "If you want to have a successful auction, you have to be the auction where the customers want to be."

Beam said the lessons and wisdom he gained from working on the other side of the auction block have already played a role in how he's running the sale.

"We've made some changes at the auction, changes in attitude and changes in our culture," he said. "We don't want to be just a good auction. We *must* be known as the auction that does the right thing. If we have to buy a car back, we will. If we have to make repairs, we will. We will be fair, and just do what's right."

Currently, the auction has seven functioning lanes, using six every week for the sale. Four additional lanes (the auction has 11 total) lane are currently being used as a condition report area. The auction sits on 125 paved acres, and includes over 135,000 square feet total in two reconditioning centers, and a 60,000 square foot arena and office building. The auction consigns 900+ vehicles a week, and posts a consistent conversion rate of 55%.

"Competition in the marketplace is strong," observes Beam. "We're seeing a lot of consolidation in the industry, and technology is improving and changing at light speed. We have to work harder, do more, and offer better services. We're looking at turning one of our recon buildings into a retail facility. We want to be able maximize the value of what we have."

Beam said that while corporate auctions are formidable competitors, there are ways to compete.

"We have to be on our toes, adapting quickly and adapting well," he said. "As an independent auction we have a tremendous advantage: we can make decisions and implement them immediately. But we have to be smart, finding out what the competition cannot provide, and exploiting that weakness."

Beam, at 58, said he expects this to be his last move, and plans to finish his career at Dealers Auto Auction of Oklahoma City.