

OEM Dealer Nominee

Kelly Payne

Kelly Payne is a used truck man, a builder of departments, and, most importantly to him, a grandfather of four.

Now in his 36th year in an industry he still loves, Kelly started as a parts delivery driver and worked his way through nearly every side of the business. From delivering parts to leading used truck operations across multiple dealerships, he learned the business from the ground up—parts, sales, service, inventory, finance, leasing, and, above all, people.

That experience shaped a philosophy Kelly has carried throughout his career: a used truck is never just another piece of inventory. It represents a customer's livelihood, a dealer's investment, and a promise that must hold up long after the sale.

Kelly built his career not simply by selling trucks, but by building successful used truck departments and the teams behind them. He established inspection and valuation standards, managed P&L responsibility, brought sales, parts, and service together, and helped teams understand that aging inventory is something to manage—not something to decorate the lot with. His experience also earned him a seat on OEM dealer councils, where he helped make sure the realities of the used truck business had a voice at the table.

Kelly has never needed the work to be glamorous. He has simply believed it needed to be done right.

Away from the dealership, the title that means the most to Kelly is Grandpa. His four grandchildren are a reminder of something he has never forgotten during 36 years in this business: behind every owner-operator, fleet driver, technician, salesperson, and customer is a family depending on them to make it home and keep moving forward.

Kelly Payne started as a parts driver and stayed long enough to become a leader. He built departments instead of simply selling trucks, developed people instead of simply managing them, and after 36 years, still genuinely loves the industry that gave him his start.

That is the career—and the legacy—behind Kelly Payne's nomination for OEM Dealer of the Year.

