



**SPECIALTY EQUIPMENT MARKET ASSOCIATION**

**SEMA SERVICE  
CANDIDACY QUESTIONNAIRE  
2024 ELECTION YEAR**

**DAVID MORTON  
FIFTH THIRD BANK**

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:

See attached LinkedIn Profile.

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:

- Served on multiple boards, including more than 10 years on the North Carolina Motorsports Association board, the last five as an executive member and treasurer as well as serving on various committees.
- Launched Fifth Third's motorsports practice and for the last 10 years have provided the vision, set the strategies, and led a Fifth Third team to best serve the industry.
- Oversaw the Fifth Third's efforts to form a strategic partnership with RFK Racing in 2012.
- Spearheaded establishing a relationship with SEMA and PRI, and managed show activations.
- In-depth industry knowledge gained by working closely with hundreds of suppliers, attending PRI for 10 years and SEMA since 2019, and representing the Bank at more than 250 races.
- Have led the annual United Way campaign for Fifth Third's Carolinas Region for five years, raising more than a million dollars to benefit the community.

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:

- Continued growth in responsibilities at Fifth Third Bank with a most recent promotion to senior vice president and addition to the senior leadership team in the Carolinas.
- Formation and launch of a new business unit within Fifth Third to focus on motorsports and automotive aftermarket companies.
- Creation of a partnership with SEMA to be the first-ever sponsor of the SEMA Banquet reception.
- Multiple Fifth Third Spirit of the Pin awards for being a top collaborator and for accountability.
- Pursuing a lifelong dream, earned my private pilot license in 2021. One of my most challenging yet thrilling accomplishments!

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

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

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?

Having worked for both small companies and large companies, as well as having owned my business and worked closely with many business clients at the Fifth Third Bank for more than 17 years, I have a strong, broad understanding of various businesses and the issues they face. I also believe not being an endemic part of the industry nor having a long legacy of "this is how we've always done it" enables me to contribute a fresh outlook and

new ideas.

What I'm most passionate about is helping businesses in the industry thrive, by providing the education and resources to make them more efficient, competitive and prepared to capitalize on growth opportunities.

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

When I think back over my career, there are two notable achievements that I am most proud of. The first was launching my own business, a boutique agency, providing creative services to companies across multiple industries. We created award-winning marketing pieces that helped our clients achieve their objectives. The second time again leveraged my entrepreneurial spirit to establish a motorsports and automotive aftermarket practice from the ground up at Fifth Third. It's been rewarding seeing its growth and success.

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.

Opportunities:

- Embracing alternative fuels.
- Developing future generations of car and racing enthusiasts.

Threats:

- Tighter economy, impacting discretionary purchases such as aftermarket parts and restricting access to capital.
- Lack of a skilled labor force to meet the technical needs of manufacturing in the automotive sector.

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 important long-term issue and opportunity facing the industry is the potential decline of car and racing enthusiasts. We need future generations to be as passionate about cars as past generations. Without it, the industry will likely decline, innovation will wane, and we will lose support for legislation that protects the future of motorsports and the automotive aftermarket. A few ideas to promote car and racing enthusiasts in future generations are:

- Offer junior/student SEMA memberships.
- Hold student events at the SEMA Garages and PRI Indy office.
- Expand social-media engagement with a SEMA and PRI channels strictly for youth.
- Make SEMA Fest free for youth under 18 when accompanied by an adult.
- Add mini-SEMA Fests across the country to promote car culture beyond Vegas.

- Work with race game publishers and influencers to reach youth where many first get exposed to cool cars and racing.
- Partner with high schools to:
  - o Ignite the imagination of students with guest speakers from the industry.
  - o Educate guidance counselors on career paths in automotive.
  - o Send copies of *SEMA* and *PRI* magazine to high school libraries.
  - o Tighten alignment with racing series, including showcasing SEMA and hotrods in the fan zones at several races across the country.

9. Given the 9 [Strategic Priorities](#) that 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?

- Motorsports--Preserve and Grow:
  - o I think it's about continuing to celebrate motorsports' rich history, personalities and cars through storytelling while looking ahead with excitement and embracing the next generation whether that be ICE race cars or technologies yet to be invented. Motorsports will evolve and so should SEMA's approach to motorsports. To accomplish this, it's critical that SEMA form more strategic partnerships with all the major racing series. Outside of NHRA, there's a notable absence or limited presence of NASCAR, IndyCar, IMSA, Formula One/Formula E, and several high-profile grassroots series.
- Improve Member Engagement
  - o There are some in the industry who feel disenfranchised from SEMA and don't understand or believe that SEMA is working on their behalf to strengthen the industry and to provide a viable platform to bolster their business. I propose that some of this can be solved by SEMA leadership thinking of members as partners: working together to solve issues, being more transparent about business operations and decisions, and genuinely seeking feedback (such as with the SEMA Show) from members with the intent to implement changes where beneficial to SEMA and its members.

10. If elected to the SEMA board of directors what unique qualities, experiences, connections, or characteristics are you able to activate during your 3-year term?

For the last 12 years, I've managed our partnerships in racing and for the last nine years have led our motorsports practice. During that time, I've built extensive connectivity across the sport with the sanctioning bodies, race teams, suppliers and corporate sponsors.

As an executive with the 10th largest commercial bank in the United States, I also bear resources and a financial knowledgebase that could be beneficial to SEMA. For example, I have access to subject-matter experts in commercial banking, capital markets (M&A), and cash management, as well use of the Bank's chief economist.

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

From my perspective, SEMA is quite adept at keeping pace with industry trends and seizing opportunities. That said, I believe SEMA could provide a greater emphasis on technology, potentially with a dedicated showcase, and expand powersports beyond UTVs.

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

Frankly, it would be presumptuous of me to say which topics or issues I would focus on prior to starting a term on the Board and better understanding the priorities and where the most critical needs are. However, as I indicated in question 9, preserving and growing motorsports would likely be a focus as would member engagement and trade show enhancement. I would gain support by listening, seeking understanding and common ground, analyzing data points, and making recommendations that best serve the interest of the industry.

13. Where do you the association and show having an advantage over and edge over competitors in a similar space

- **Scale.** The sheer scale of SEMA gives the association and its Show the advantage of having all things motorsports and automotive aftermarket “under one roof.”
- **Legacy.** Sixty years of serving the motor-vehicle aftermarket matters. It’s hard to replicate the experience and relationships gained over that many years.
- **Brand awareness.** Ask people outside of the industry if they’ve ever heard of SEMA and you’ll likely hear either they have attended the Show or know someone who has been. That’s not the case for competitors.
- **Influence.** Except for maybe automobile manufacturers, there are few organizations better positioned with the resources to advocate for the industry.

14. Questionnaires can be 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:

As a former small-business owner, I understand the perspective of many automotive aftermarket small businesses and the issues they face running their companies. I also have advertising agency experience, which afforded me the opportunity to help companies across a wide range of industries grow their business.

Lastly, I love new challenges and recently earned my private pilot license. While not automotive, general aviation shares many of the same traits and passion.

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

It may sound cliché, but at the end of my career I want to be able to look back and know my work amounted to more than just a paycheck. That I’ve made difference in the business that I’ve been blessed by. That through my contributions, I’ve left a legacy that makes our

country, communities and industry even better places to work, live and play. I believe serving on the SEMA Board would give me such an opportunity and enable me to help shape and ensure a prosperous future for SEMA and the automotive aftermarket.