



# DRIVING INCLUSION

## 2023 DEI REPORT

PREPARED BY:



**MESH** / diversity



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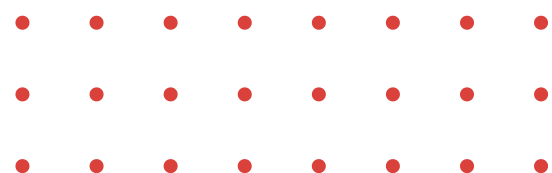
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# DRIVING INCLUSION

**dott.** and **MESH/diversity** present a report on the Overall Maturity of the Automotive Aftermarket Industry's DEI efforts

In the realm of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), the emphasis is frequently placed on demographic aspects. However, there's an issue with perceiving diversity itself as either the solution or the primary measure for evaluating DEI initiatives.

The purpose of our research is to gain a deeper insight into the DEI maturity levels of companies in the Automotive Aftermarket Industry. We have evaluated this by looking at the sustainability, systemic presence, and scalability of DEI efforts across the top 100 companies in the sector.

In essence, diversity can thrive as a result of a robust and healthy organizational culture, which in turn fosters an environment where individuals can excel and achieve their full potential.



**Diversity isn't merely a target;**

it's the natural consequence of an inclusive environment. When we create a workplace where diversity blossoms as a result of genuine inclusivity and respect for all perspectives, we unlock the true potential of our people."

**Tammy Tecklenburg**  
dott. Founder & CEO

# DEI CHALLENGES FACED

For this survey, we collected data that spoke to these common facets of effective DEI programs



## Data Measurement

"Where are we now?" If you don't know the answer to this question, how can you know that change has occurred? You need to establish a benchmark that frames your movement (both positive and negative). This is why metrics are vital. You need to be measuring the right things in the right way for the right reasons.

Any assessment tool you use must establish a baseline measure of your organization's current cultural health. And it should have the capacity to provide information about dissatisfaction and resistance to DEI change over the course of the DEI transformational change process.



## Leadership Support & Buy-In

Typically, even in large organizations, one person is designated to the role of sponsoring DEI change within the organization. When DEI change is centered in just one or even two individuals, the risk is that all forward movement and success are tied to those people. This is to say that if they leave the organization or other priorities begin to take precedence, all momentum and impetus leaves with them or is shuffled to the side of their desk. It cuts at the trust employees have that these types of change efforts are real and genuinely desired (e.g. "I guess it was just another effort ... I wonder when we start the next one?")

While successful DEI change needs to be embraced by many, it is imperative that ALL members of senior leadership get on board with DEI work. Executives and senior leaders play an essential role as primary sponsors of DEI change in an organization. People will look to leaders to walk the talk and this requires that they not only emulate inclusive behaviors but that they work to nurture it in others.

# DEI CHALLENGES FACED



## Learning and Development

Research tells us that safety, belonging and inclusion are quantifiable, manageable commodities that impact drive, innovation and employee engagement. DEI Learning and Development programs too often are:

- One-off efforts (e.g. session on Unconscious Bias)
- Led by people with “passion” but no real DEI expertise
- Not linked to a L & D organizational strategy

DEI Learning & Development programs must facilitate the growth of healthy and respectful personal and professional relationships within organizational teams, setting the stage for a healthy organizational culture where everyone can grow and reach their potential and see diversity thrive.



## Values + Vision = Strategy

Too often DEI change work isn't connected to an organizational change strategy that includes connection to your organizational values and a vision for what healthy cultural changes looks like.

Your organizational VALUES answer these questions:

- What do we care about?
- What is our behavioral compass?
- How will/do we treat each other? Clients? Stakeholders?

Your DEI VISION provides direction and answers the following question:

- What does it look like when we get where we're going?

# WHAT WE MEASURED

We asked respondents questions to give us insight into their DEI efforts, which are broken down into the following categories:



## Overall DEI Maturity

Your organization's overall DEI maturity relates to how scalable, sustainable and systemic your organization's DEI efforts are at this time. Within each of these areas your scores will indicate the stage of DEI development your organization is in: Uninitiated, Early or Proactive.

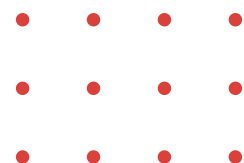


## Scalability of DEI Efforts

Scalable DEI change is a strategic approach that emphasizes the importance of **designing initiatives that can be easily modified and adapted to suit the changing needs and circumstances of the organization.** This approach recognizes that a company's growth and evolution over time may require adjustments to its diversity, equity and inclusion efforts.

Scalable change considers these 3 key markers:

- **Education/Training** - organization's approach to DEI training
- **Approach** - organization's approach to DEI organizational change
- **Change Ownership** - responsibility for developing and implementing DEI initiatives



# WHAT WE MEASURED



## Sustainability of DEI Efforts

Sustainable change ensures that **changes in your organization will continue to be effective in the long term.** This means creating and reinforcing policies and procedures that are built to last and are regularly monitored to ensure they meet the needs of the present while setting you up for success in the future.

Sustainable change considers these 4 key markers:

- **Organizational Mindset** - evidence of resistance/pushback when trying to implement DEI initiatives
- **Vision** - having a DEI-centered vision
- **Senior Leadership** - role/importance of inclusive leadership skills
- **Middle Management** - role/importance of inclusive leadership skills



## Systemization of DEI Efforts

Systemic change considers your organization as a whole rather than just its individual departments or teams and **creates solutions that are integrated and mutually reinforcing.** When creating lasting, systemic DEI change, it's vital to integrate DEI principles and practices into the very fabric of an organization's culture - its **values, beliefs and operations.** This means ensuring that your efforts are not just one-time events, but are instead ongoing and continuously supported by the organization and its **leaders.**

Systemic change considers these 3 key markers:

- **Systems Integration** - if/how DEI goals and initiatives are embedded within your organization's systems (resources/budget, participation)
- **Talent Lifecycle** - how Minoritized Employees experience your workplace
- **Metrics** - if/how metrics are used in driving culture change



DRIVING INCLUSION STUDY

# WHAT WE MEASURED



## UNDERSTANDING THE SCORES

For this report, each of the categories we measured are scored on a scale of 0-100%. These scores are then assigned a stage of maturity based on these ranges:

### **0-37% Uninitiated Stage**

Your organization is in the very early stages of DEI engagement. Without a clear roadmap for inclusive organizational change, you will find it difficult to do DEI work that goes beyond tick-box measures.

### **38-64% Early Stage**

Your organization is currently in the stage of, “let’s work out how to do this,” regarding organizational DEI change. Without a well-defined roadmap, it will be challenging to fully comprehend and address the systemic barriers that impede comprehensive DEI work.

### **65%+ Proactive Stage**

Your organization is in the upper echelon of those engaging DEI organizational change. Now is the time to develop a fulsome roadmap for inclusive organizational change that considers everything from resistance to vision to process.



# INCLUSION HIGHLIGHTS

49%

**OVERALL MATURITY**  
Early Stage

47%

**SCALABILITY**  
Early Stage

55%

**SUSTAINABILITY**  
Early Stage

47%

**SYSTEMIZATION**  
Early Stage

## Industry-Wide Findings

Survey results indicate that, industry-wide, DEI work is by and large in the **Early Stage** of engagement. This stage is characterized by the notion of “let’s work out how to do this” regarding Inclusive organizational change. This signifies that a foundation is being built for better DEI work to come. To ensure the overall industry continues to progress, it is important to pay attention to the following markers to continue to generate further success:

- Your Executive/Senior Leaders have to be seen as stewarding efforts and they need to communicate clearly about both progress and the value of DEI as a fundamental pillar for the organization.
- You must approach the process of change strategically with a well defined roadmap including a DEI vision connected to goals and objectives to reach the future state you desire.

# INCLUSION HIGHLIGHTS

- Interpersonal DEI skills need to be a core component of all employee development plans. And, more importantly, Inclusive Leadership skills have to be seen, and measured as foundational KPIs for all people leaders. If you're doing so, no more one-off trainings (e.g. Unconscious Bias).
- In Inclusive organizational change, lagging indicators - like diverse hiring and promotion - don't tell the true story of whether or not your culture and systems are sustainably inclusive. Metrics will help you to explore how the culture is being experienced by employees to identify leading indicators of DEI change - safety, inclusion, belonging.

Please see the breakdown by industry segment for further insight into recommendations to move the DEI needle forward.

## Industry Perception of DEI

4.5/10

In response to the question: "How would you rate the current level of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the aftermarket industry?"

It is interesting to note, without any defined parameters for this query, that there is a general consensus from respondents that the industry is in the **Early Stage** of DEI development. This aligns with the data that emerged from other survey questions that sought feedback re: the following markers:

- Scalability of DEI Efforts
- Sustainability of DEI Efforts
- Systematization of DEI Efforts

Refer back to the **What We Measured** (pg. 6-7) section of the report for the full breakdown of these categories.

# PARTICIPANT PROFILE

## Industry Segments



Retailers



Suppliers



Warehouse  
Distributors

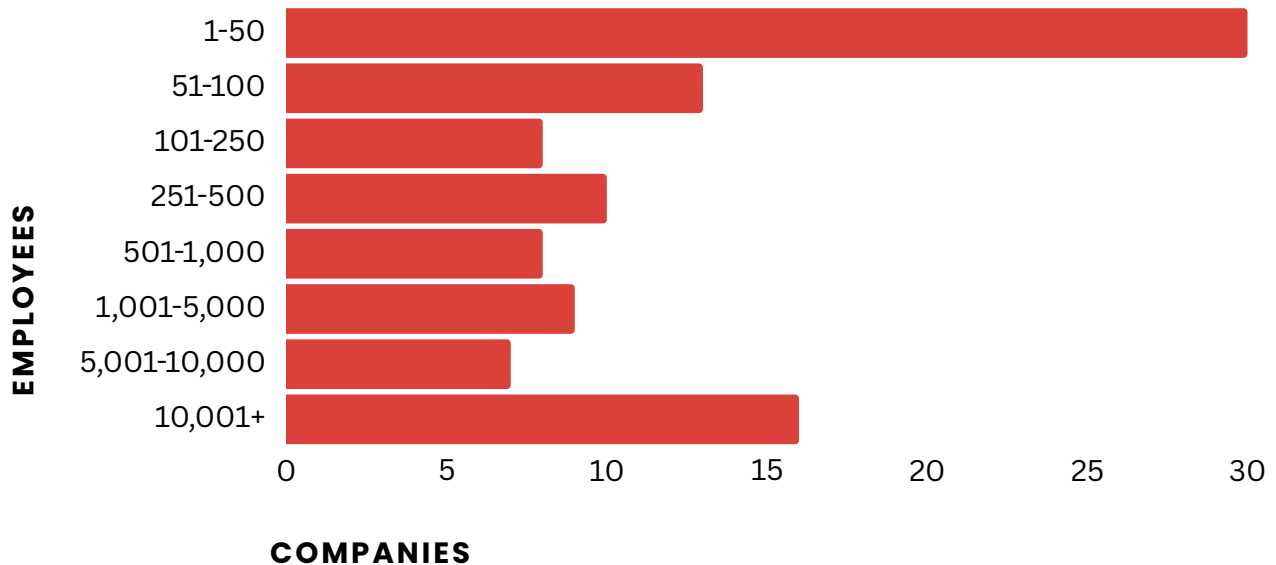


Independent  
Repair Garages



Other

## Company Sizes



**Total Companies:** 100

**Total Employees:** 486,746

# DRIVING INCLUSION STUDY

## KEY FINDINGS

### INDUSTRY SEGMENT

#### Retailers

Comprises 167,000 employees

Overall  
Maturity

**57%**

Early Stage

### Results

Survey results indicate that, industry-wide, DEI work is, by and large, in the “Early Stage” of engagement. This stage is characterized by the notion of “let’s work out how to do this” regarding Inclusive organizational change. This signifies that a foundation is being built for better DEI work to come.

To ensure that you continue to progress there are some critical and practical issues you can engage in to enhance the scalability, sustainability and systematization of your efforts. While attention to all of these areas is important, the three are interconnected so additional attention in one area will positively impact the others.

Sustainability

**60%**

Early Stage

Scalability

**53%**

Early Stage

Systemization

**56%**

Early Stage

# DRIVING INCLUSION STUDY

# KEY FINDINGS

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## Recommendations

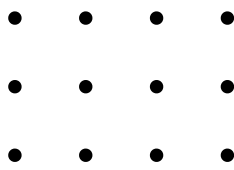
It is worth noting that Sustainability of DEI efforts has the greatest potential for immediate growth. Sustainability of efforts is connected to:

- Resistance or pushback when trying to implement DEI initiatives
- Having a DEI-centered vision that describes your preferred future state for your organization's DEI efforts
- Understanding the importance of the role of inclusive leadership skills for senior leaders

Resistance to DEI change to one degree or another is a given – there is always pushback for organizational change no matter what is being considered. Communication is key in mitigating this. You need to establish communication channels and feedback loops re: your DEI change efforts.

If you haven't done so already, now is the time to develop a clear roadmap for Inclusive organizational change that is centered around a concise and inspirational DEI vision for the future that connects to an actionable strategy with clearly defined goals and objectives to reach that vision.

Inclusive leadership cannot be seen as a “nice to have.” So if you haven't done so already, now is the time to shake off those one-off “Unconscious Bias” trainings and opt for a more systematized approach to engaging Inclusive Leaders



***An AutoZoner Always... Puts Customers First, Embraces Diversity and Cares About People. These are three of our company's Values, and they are a vital part of our unique and powerful culture. We welcome each individual's heritage, differences, qualities and value the ideas and opinions of all.***

**Albert Dennis, Director of  
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion  
AUTOZONE**



# DRIVING INCLUSION STUDY

## KEY FINDINGS

### INDUSTRY SEGMENT

#### Suppliers

Comprises 221,200 employees

Overall  
Maturity

**50%**

Early Stage

### Results

Survey results indicate that, industry-wide, DEI work is, by and large, in the “Early Stage” of engagement. This stage is characterized by the notion of “let’s work out how to do this” regarding Inclusive organizational change. This signifies that a foundation is being built for better DEI work to come.

To ensure that you continue to progress there are some critical and practical issues you can engage in to enhance the scalability, sustainability and systematization of your efforts. While attention to all of these areas is important, the three are interconnected so additional attention in one area will positively impact the others.

Sustainability

**55%**

Early Stage

Scalability

**45%**

Early Stage

Systemization

**46%**

Early Stage

# DRIVING INCLUSION STUDY

# KEY FINDINGS

## Recommendations

It is worth noting that Scalability and Systematization of DEI efforts need some attention. With an objective of achieving inclusive organizational change, it is critical to approach the process strategically in these areas:

Scalability of efforts is connected to:

- DEI education and training
- Approach to DEI change (nature of initiatives)
- Ownership of DEI change (developing and implementing DEI initiatives)

Systematization of efforts is connected to:

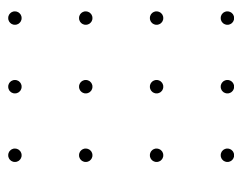
- Resourcing - budget and nature/extent of employee participation
- Talent Lifecycle - how Minoritized Employees experience the workplace (not just the number of Minoritized employees there are)
- Metrics - if/how metrics are used to drive positive culture change

If you haven't done so already, you need to implement and leverage DEI metrics that explore leading indicators of DEI change: safety, inclusion, belonging. In short, HOW the culture of your organization is being experienced by all employees. Creating more diversity (i.e. hiring &/or promotion of Minoritized employees) is a lagging indicator of strong DEI work.

Avoid one-off initiatives (e.g. lunch 'n learns, one-off trainings, courageous conversations, etc.). You must approach change strategically with a well-defined roadmap that includes a vision and action plan that helps people understand what role they have to play in DEI change.

Assure that money and people resources are available to DEI change leaders so the work doesn't fall to the side of the desk when other pressing demands come into play.





***The automotive aftermarket is ripe with opportunities to grow, learn, and network. dott. takes this to a new level, offering a space to come together to improve our culture and engagement efforts. Through dott.'s partner, MESH/diversity, we are improving our DEIB efforts using science and data. dott. has made a tremendous difference for us.***

**Kristine Frost, Chief People Officer**  
**STANDARD MOTOR PRODUCTS**



# KEY FINDINGS

## INDUSTRY SEGMENT

### Warehouse Distributors

Comprises 15,500 employees

Overall Maturity

**40%**

Early Stage

## Results

Survey results indicate that, industry-wide, DEI work is, by and large, in the “Early Stage” of engagement. This stage is characterized by the notion of “let’s work out how to do this” regarding Inclusive organizational change. This signifies that a foundation is being built for better DEI work to come.

To ensure that you continue to progress there are some critical and practical issues you can engage in to enhance the scalability, sustainability and systematization of your efforts. While attention to all of these areas is important, the three are interconnected so additional attention in one area will positively impact the others.

Sustainability

**48%**

Early Stage

Scalability

**39%**

Early Stage

Systemization

**33%**

Uninitiated Stage

# DRIVING INCLUSION STUDY

# KEY FINDINGS

## Recommendations

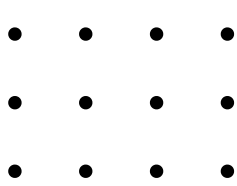
It is worth noting that Systematization of DEI efforts falls into the Uninitiated Stage, the very early stages of DEI engagement. Systematization of efforts is connected to:

- Resourcing – budget and nature/extent of employee participation
- Talent Lifecycle – how Minoritized Employees experience the workplace (not just the number of Minoritized employees there are)
- Metrics – if/how metrics are used to drive positive culture change

Your Executive Leaders need to stand at the forefront of your journey. Without their clear support and desire to engage DEI in real ways – such as resourcing – your DEI change will be an uphill battle.

Organizational change is a strategic activity in need of clear processes. If you are more or less throwing stuff at the wall and hoping it sticks – one-off initiatives and practices such as one-off trainings, cultural lunch ‘n learns, courageous conversations – this has got to change. You need to develop a clear roadmap, complete with a concise and inspirational DEI vision and clearly defined actionable goals and objectives, to drive the work on an organizational level.

You need to implement and leverage DEI metrics that explore leading indicators of DEI change: safety, inclusion, belonging. In short, HOW the culture of your organization is being experienced by all employees. Creating more diversity (i.e. hiring &/or promotion of Minoritized employees is a lagging indicator of strong DEI work). Metrics will provide you with real data to inform leadership’s desire and ability to move forward with DEI.



***Creating space for diversity and inclusion – with the goal of sustainable equity – starts with the desire for change and the ability to honestly and objectively assess where you currently stand. Working for and with leaders who are committed to driving forward towards this goal has made all the difference in our journey.***

**Jillian Weishaar, Manager of  
Education and Diversity & Inclusion**

**THE PARTS AUTHORITY**



# KEY FINDINGS

## INDUSTRY SEGMENT

### Independent Repair Garages

Comprises 255 employees

Overall Maturity

**49%**

Early Stage

## Results

Survey results indicate that, industry-wide, DEI work is, by and large, in the “Early Stage” of engagement. This stage is characterized by the notion of “let’s work out how to do this” regarding Inclusive organizational change. This signifies that a foundation is being built for better DEI work to come.

To ensure that you continue to progress there are some critical and practical issues you can engage in to enhance the scalability, sustainability and systematization of your efforts. While attention to all of these areas is important, the three are interconnected so additional attention in one area will positively impact the others.

Sustainability

**61%**

Early Stage

Scalability

**43%**

Early Stage

Systemization

**41%**

Early Stage

# KEY FINDINGS

## Recommendations

It is worth noting that Scalability and Systematization of DEI efforts need some attention. With an objective of achieving inclusive organizational change, it is critical to approach the process strategically in these areas:

Scalability of efforts is connected to:

- DEI education and training
- Approach to DEI change (nature of initiatives)
- Ownership of DEI change (developing and implementing DEI initiatives)

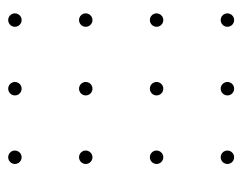
Systematization of efforts is connected to:

- Resourcing - budget and nature/extent of employee participation
- Talent Lifecycle - how Minoritized Employees experience the workplace (not just the number of Minoritized employees there are)
- Metrics - if/how metrics are used to drive positive culture change

If you haven't done so already, you need to implement and leverage DEI metrics that explore leading indicators of DEI change: safety, inclusion, belonging. In short, HOW the culture of your organization is being experienced by all employees. Creating more diversity (i.e. hiring &/or promotion of Minoritized employees is a lagging indicator of strong DEI work).

Avoid one-off initiatives (e.g. lunch 'n learns, one-off trainings, courageous conversations, etc.). You must approach change strategically with a well-defined roadmap that includes a vision and action plan that helps people understand what role they have to play in DEI change.

Assure that money and people resources are available to DEI change leaders so the work doesn't fall to the side of the desk when other pressing demands come into play.



***We work diligently to weave DEI into the fabric of our business to positively impact our people, our customers, our community, and our industry. dott. has been essential to our journey.***

**Tara Topel, Owner**  
**TOPEL'S SERVICE CENTER, INC.**



# DRIVING INCLUSION STUDY

## KEY FINDINGS

### INDUSTRY SEGMENT

#### Other

Consulting | Training | Agencies Associations  
| Software/Data | Education

Comprises 13,692 employees

**Overall  
Maturity**

**49%**

Early Stage

### Results

Survey results indicate that, industry-wide, DEI work is, by and large, in the “Early Stage” of engagement. This stage is characterized by the notion of “let’s work out how to do this” regarding Inclusive organizational change. This signifies that a foundation is being built for better DEI work to come.

To ensure that you continue to progress there are some critical and practical issues you can engage in to enhance the scalability, sustainability and systematization of your efforts. While attention to all of these areas is important, the three are interconnected so additional attention in one area will positively impact the others.

**Sustainability**

**55%**

Early Stage

**Scalability**

**50%**

Early Stage

**Systemization**

**42%**

Early Stage



# KEY FINDINGS

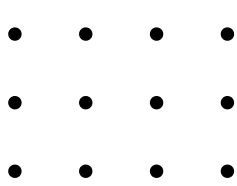
## Recommendations

Your Senior Leaders need to stand at the forefront of your journey. Without their clear support and desire to engage DEI in real ways, this will be an uphill battle. Assure that money and people resources are available to DEI change leaders so the work doesn't fall to the side of the desk when other pressing demands come into play.

Organizational change is a strategic activity in need of clear processes. Like so many others at this stage, your organization may be more or less throwing stuff at the wall and hoping it sticks. This needs to change. You must approach change strategically with a well-defined roadmap that includes a vision and action plan that helps people understand what role they have to play in DEI change.

No more one-off trainings (e.g. Unconscious Bias). They do next to nothing and, most times, they drive internal friction. Your starting point should be to build Inclusive leaders. Take the time to train your people leaders on how they can positively impact the workplace culture of their teams.

You need to implement and leverage DEI metrics that explore leading indicators of DEI change: safety, inclusion, belonging. In short, HOW the culture of your organization is being experienced by all employees. Creating more diversity (i.e. hiring &/or promotion of Minoritized employees is a lagging indicator of strong DEI work). Metrics will provide you with real data to inform leadership's desire and ability to move forward with DEI.

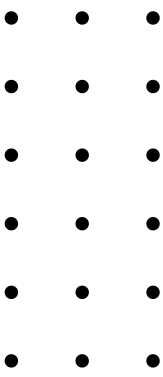


***In 2022, MOTOR established a DEI strategy to better represent the company's inclusive values and provide employees with the resources to further educate themselves and actively commit to collaboration and growth. Progress is achieved through continual focus, and MOTOR strives to lead by example in the mission to advance DEI in automotive.***

**Jeff Nosek, President**  
**MOTOR INFORMATION SYSTEMS**



# METHODOLOGY



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## About this Study

For this study, we explored the perceptions and experiences of aftermarket professionals in the realm of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). In a sector that's continuously evolving and adapting, our core interest was to discern the overall maturity of DEI programs in the industry as it relates to how Sustainable, Systemic and Scalable their efforts are.

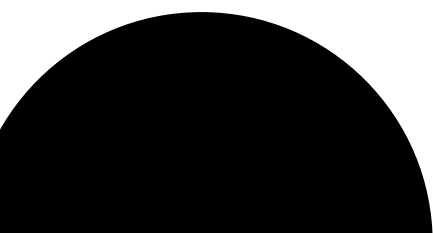
## Approach

10-Minute Online Survey

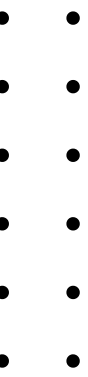
Data collected between: September, 2023 - January, 2024

Our focus was on companies in Aftermarket Automotive Industry across North America.

We surveyed C-Suite, DEI, Human Resources and Business Resource Group Leaders as part of our data gathering.



# CONNECTING **dott.s** ROUNDTABLE



A distinguished circle of industry thought leaders championing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (“DEI”) and making a lasting impact in shaping a more inclusive aftermarket.

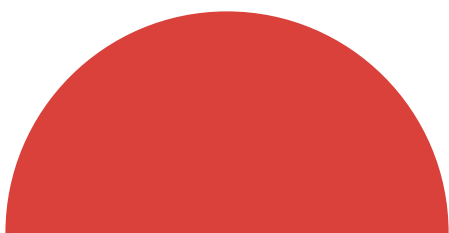
## ABOUT THE MEMBERSHIP

**Annual Roundtable Membership** – \$2,000 for 2 representatives from each company

- Members include C-Suite, DEI, Human Resources, Business Resource Group Leaders
- Topics are led by DEI practitioners
- Members share best practices and lessons learned to accelerate process
- Access to all content presented and a private LinkedIn community
- Engagement in industry wide projects and outreach programs

## READY TO JOIN?

**Register:** [Contact – DOTT \(drivenbydott.com\)](#)





**Inclusion is at the heart of our mission**

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## **ABOUT dott.**

**dott.** is a strategic business and consulting practice dedicated to Automotive and Commercial Vehicle Aftermarket leaders. Our comprehensive offerings include advisory services for executives to facilitate organizational change and foster inclusive workplaces with strong cultures. Through enriching learning experiences, we address barriers and promote inclusion to attract and retain top talent, ensuring a diverse and thriving workforce.



Email

[info@drivenbydott.com](mailto:info@drivenbydott.com)



Website

[www.drivenbydott.com](http://www.drivenbydott.com)

## **ABOUT MESH/diversity**

**MESH/diversity** offers a scalable DEI solution that combines science-based insights and metrics with customized and interactive learning to drive measurable actions. MESH supports lasting, real change that embeds EDI into an organization's culture by meeting people where they're at.



Email

[info@meshdiversity.com](mailto:info@meshdiversity.com)

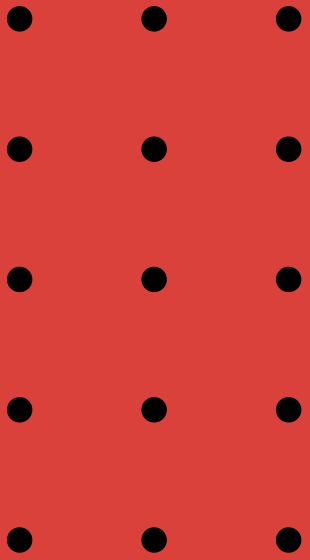


Website

[www.meshdiversity.com](http://www.meshdiversity.com)



**MESH / diversity**



**MESH** / diversity