



Pat Ziska

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Little did Patricia Ziska know at age 19 when she began her career in the bus business working for the highest achievers in the motor coach sales-side of the industry, she herself would fill similar shoes.

Though her journey is uniquely her own, Ziska learned how listening to customers' concerns, gaining their trust, following through and doing what you say you will, makes all the difference in getting ahead.

Today, as Vice President of Private Sector Coach Sales for Motor Coach Industries, (MCI), a position she has held since 2012 in a 40 plus-year career with the manufacturer, Ziska demonstrates those same leadership qualities to the executive sales team she manages in the U.S. and Canada. And today, she works to elevate and inspire other women in the industry.

MCI is the largest manufacturer of intercity coaches in North America, building the iconic MCI J4500, the industry's best-selling model for 15 consecutive years. That kind of market leadership position speaks volumes about both the quality of the product, the responsive team behind it and Ziska's hard work.

When faced with business challenges, Ziska finds that the practice of keeping an open mind, finding creative solutions and flexibility are aptitudes that also elevate a career. "Rigidity doesn't work," she says. "You have to bring a unique response to every customer's situation and remain flexible for successful outcomes."

With Ziska's product knowledge and manufacturing perspective, her contributions representing MCI on industry associations have proven valuable to new generations of male and female motor coach leaders. As a member of the American Bus Association's Women in Buses Council (WIB), Ziska has brought more women into the industry with MCI's sponsorship. She helps promote WIB's events and activities, while her networking efforts have helped build its national membership.

"When I started, women in the business were usually working side by side with their husbands as operators. Not so today," she said. "It's been rewarding to see success stories of more women running multi-generational coach businesses and we're seeing more women-owned startups, and women at the helm in commuter shuttle operations and tourism."

Four decades of experience—and counting

Ziska's path in the bus business began in 1976 when she landed a job as administrative assistant in the new coach

department with Hausman Bus Sales, a renowned dealer of all types of used buses. Hausman had just been named the U.S. sales distributor of MCI coaches.

While finishing her college degree at night, Ziska officially joined MCI when MCI acquired Hausman in 1989. By 1992 she was named MCI's Director of Customer Relations, responsible for trade shows, marketing and advertising. In 1996, she was named Vice President of Central Region Sales, leading new and pre-owned coach sales activities for the busy Chicago, IL and Dallas, TX-based regions. In 2012, she was promoted to the role of Vice President of MCI Private Sector Sales, which she leads today.

Among other milestones, Ziska helped build the Motorcoach Marketing Council and launched the earliest motorcoach green marketing environmental campaigns.

Ziska recently celebrated her 40th wedding anniversary and has four adult children — three sons and one daughter — and four grandchildren. She looks forward to continuing her MCI career at this critical time for the industry — putting her experience to work, grooming talent at MCI and engaging with customers on measures that protect and improve their business as the industry rolls to a bright future.

Advancements in accessibility, driver assistance safety systems, battery-electric environmental solutions and autonomous bus applications destined to redefine the public's relationship with automobiles are on the rise. As a subsidiary of NFI Group, one of the world's largest independent global bus manufacturers, MCI is ahead of the curve in most of these areas thanks to sister company New Flyer's investment in bringing these progressive concepts to market.

Ziska says changes in public policy, tourism, commuter culture and technologies shaping products and businesses is a given in the bus industry, and post-pandemic, group transport will have to adapt to yet another new reality. "Receptivity to these new changes and finding the advantages in the unexpected is what sets leaders apart," said Ziska.

In addition to the J4500, MCI builds the all-new 35-foot J3500 model, and the workhorse D-Series including the ADA-accessible MCI D45 CRT LE Commuter Coach, and the battery-electric, zero-emission D45 CRTe LE. MCI also provides maintenance, repair, 24-hour roadside assistance, parts, and technician training through the industry's only Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) accredited MCI Academy. Learn more at mcicoach.com.