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— Dave de Poincy, President, East Manufacturing

Q: How's business?

A: Very good. We're very fortunate. On steel dump trailers, we don't even market them and we're booked way into next year. We're looking to expand our facility hiring, to triple our capacity for steel end-dumps.

Q: You're known for aluminum trailers. Why are customers coming to you for steel dumps?

A: Other manufacturers are way out on orders, too, so customers are going wherever they can. They love our product — it's a good one — even though we don't advertise it.

Q: What's the advantage of aluminum over steel?

A: Our market share in aluminum flats has grown from 6% in '98 to 30% now, and it's all because of corrosion. An aluminum flatbed will last 20 years versus six to eight years for steel. The aluminum flat, at \$28,000 to \$30,000, costs \$10,000 more, but you can see that it's a very good tradeoff.

Read the full interview at www.truckinginfo.com/depoincy

Eyes on the economy at ATA MC&E

In a big change from last year's assessment of a "just OK" economy, this year's economic panel at the American Trucking Associations annual Management Conference & Exhibition was significantly more upbeat.

Truck tonnage index hit a record high in August, pointed out ATA Chief Economist Bob Costello at the meeting in San Diego in early October.

Jack Kleinhenz of the National Retail Federation noted that "we had a mild summer in terms of spending, so disposable income is going to be available for the rest of the year as we go into the holiday season.

He added that consumer sentiment has increased since the start of 2014, according to the University of Michigan Consumer Sentiment Index, while online purchases also continue to increase.

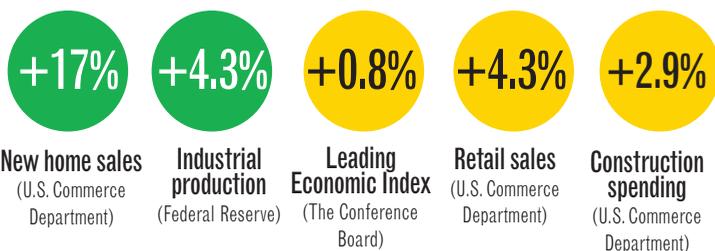
For Chad Moutray of the National Association of Manufacturers, a survey his group did with *Industry Week* magazine shows the economy is definitely bouncing back, noting that "87% of our members are either somewhat or very positive about their own company's outlook. That's a pretty strong figure."

John Felmy, chief economist at the American Petroleum Institute, highlighted the increase in U.S. production of crude oil and natural gas.

"Crude oil has turned around dramatically over the last few years to an increase of 3 million barrels a day," Felmy said. "What's most important about the increase in fuel production in the U.S. is that it has almost exactly offset the decline in production in other parts of the world."

— Stephane Babcock, Senior Editor

ECONOMIC INDICATORS



September 2014: New home sales hit a six-month high, up 17% over last year; 467,000 annual rate was best since July 2007. **Industrial production** was 4.3% above a year earlier; month-to-month 1% increase biggest in nearly two years. The Conference Board's **Leading Economic Index** was up 0.8% to 104.4, following no change in August. This suggests moderate growth in short term; housing still seen as longer-term concern. Up 4.3% from a year earlier, **retail sales** were down 0.3% from August. **Construction spending**, though up 2.9% year over year, fell for a second straight month, with seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$950.9 billion down 0.4% from downwardly revised August numbers.

■ Positive ■ Concern ■ Negative