

March 9-10, 2027 Hall D, George R. Brown Convention Center - Houston, Texas

Speaker Interview – Joshua Park

Friday, 6 February 2026

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Ahead of Lubricant Expo North America we caught up with Joshua Park to discuss the top 3 challenges and opportunities driving the North American lubricants industry. Along with the importance of Lubricant Expo North America and how these gatherings create a neutral forum where leaders can align on emerging tech, regulatory expectations along with investments, sustainability and digitilization.

Tell us about yourself, what are your key priorities and responsibilities within your role?

I joined Chemical Engineering Partners (CEP) in 2007 and have had the privilege of leading the company as CEO for 10 years. Throughout my career, I've focused on advancing sustainable technologies within the lubricants and re-refining sector. As CEO, my primary responsibility is to set CEP's long-term strategic direction and ensure we continue to lead the industry in both technology licensing and operational performance. In addition to developing world-class re-refining technology, we support our licensees with process optimization, troubleshooting, and operational guidance so they can run reliably and competitively. Helping the licensees with ensuring consistent product quality, optimizing yield, and maintaining a secure feedstock supply chain remains central to my priorities, as they ultimately determine the long-term success of any rerefining operation. My overarching goal is to help the industry produce high-quality base oils while accelerating the transition toward a more circular and sustainable future.

What are the top 3 challenges and opportunities driving the North American Lubricants industry at present?

The North American lubricants industry is at a defining moment shaped by three major dynamics. First, the energy transition and rapid electrification are forcing companies to rethink their long-term product strategies and diversify beyond traditional automotive demand. Second, accelerating ESG expectations are creating one of the strongest tailwinds the rerefined base oil (RRBO) industry has ever experienced. Companies are under growing pressure to demonstrate real circularity, making RRBO integral—not optional—to achieving sustainability commitments. Finally, rising geopolitical volatility and supply-chain fragmentation underscore the need for regional resilience. Expanding domestic advanced rerefining capacity offers both a strategic hedge and an opportunity to meet increasing demand for traceable, low-carbon products. Together, these forces are reshaping the competitive landscape and creating significant opportunities for industry leaders who invest early and decisively.

What is the current state of adoption for rerefined base oils in North America, and what barriers remain?

Adoption of rerefined base oils in North America has moved from niche to mainstream as more companies commit to measurable sustainability outcomes. Market confidence has grown substantially, particularly as modern hydrotreated RRBO consistently matches or exceeds the performance of many virgin base oils. This has broadened acceptance across industrial, commercial, and automotive applications.

However, several systemic barriers remain. The most significant long-term challenge is feedstock availability. As vehicle electrification gradually reduces used-oil generation, securing reliable and diversified feedstock streams becomes increasingly critical. A second barrier is operational: producers must continue investing in yield improvement and cost-efficient processes to remain competitive across market cycles.

A third and often overlooked barrier is regulatory. Current U.S. policy still allows the widespread burning of used motor oil for energy recovery, which destroys a valuable feedstock that could otherwise be regenerated multiple times as a high-quality lubricant. When used oil is burned, its lifecycle value is lost after a single use. Increasing the proportion of used oil directed toward collection and rerefining would significantly strengthen circularity and enable further expansion of the rerefining sector.

Addressing these feedstock, operational, and regulatory challenges is essential to unlocking RRBO's full potential.

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Where do you see the greatest growth opportunities for RRBO in North America over the next 5–10 years?

The greatest growth opportunity for RRBO in North America over the next decade will come from accelerating ESG initiatives and driving the lubricant industry toward genuine circularity. As corporations face increasing pressure to demonstrate measurable carbon reductions, RRBO is becoming a strategic enabler of sustainability—far more than a cost-competitive alternative. Producers that can quantify, verify, and communicate the carbon benefits of rerefined base oils will have a significant competitive advantage.

A major opportunity lies in collaborating with large oil companies and global brands to formalize and monetize these environmental benefits, including the development of recognized carbon-credit or low-carbon certification frameworks. RRBO is no longer a cheap alternative blending component, but a partner in achieving a sustainable future for the lubricant industry.

Additionally, RRBO producers investing in innovative technologies such as 4 cSt Group III products for high-performance industrial and synthetic markets will be able to move up the value chain and differentiate through performance. Furthermore, strategic capital expenditure into areas like the recovery of heavy base oils from asphalt flux streams can unlock new feedstock pathways and extract additional value.

Companies that combine ESG leadership, advanced technology, and strong commercial capabilities will be best positioned to shape the next phase of RRBO growth.

Why are events like Lubricant Expo North America important for your industry?

Events like Lubricant Expo North America are essential because they bring together the full ecosystem — technology providers, producers, formulators, policymakers, and customers — at a time of rapid change. These gatherings create a neutral forum where leaders can align on emerging technologies, regulatory expectations, and investments needed to advance sustainability and digitalization. They also provide invaluable opportunities to meet a wide range of industry experts and exchange ideas on solving the challenges and opportunities facing the RRBO sector. As much as I provide guidance to our clients, I also learn tremendously from these interactions, gaining insights that shape both our strategy and our technology development. Ultimately, the Expo strengthens collaboration across the lubricant supply chain and helps ensure we are collectively preparing for the next generation of low-carbon, high-performance solutions.

Don't miss the opportunity to hear Joshua Park speak on the panel, The Evolving Landscape of Rerefined Base Oils (RRBOs), Track 1 at 11:00am – 12:30pm – **[View the full agenda here](#)**

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Monday March 8

Exhibitor and VIP
Networking Event –
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Wednesday March

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