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Last year brought some new challenges to the Midwest. As with the rest of the country, the lack of funding brought many jobs to a standstill and prevented others from coming out of the ground. St. Louis has been hit hard with the closing of a **Chrysler** plant that resulted in the loss of 6,400 jobs plus layoffs at **GM**, **Boeing**, **US Steel** plants and **Anheuser Busch**. Parts of the Midwest also experienced one of the wettest periods in recorded history which delayed many projects from getting started and completed. There were some bright spots. There is a new clean coal plant and a \$4 billion expansion at **Conoco Phillips** refinery. More than 800 bridges in Missouri are being replaced and some business is being produced with loft conversions of downtown warehouses. We've seen a shift of salespeople moving around between dealerships and factory regional managers taking sales and management positions with distributors. Most distributors expect 2010 to be another rough year with business slightly improving over 2009. Everyone has the opinion 2011 will be a strong year.