

**News Scrap**



Movement that inspires

Global Brand & Customer Experience Division  
Ownership Enhancement Team

## Tips for adding ownership value, loyalty in an increasingly digital industry

The independent repair facility will host classes that teach vehicle care basics and driver safety to new drivers in their community. The plan is to teach automotive basics that include changing a tire, checking tire pressure, fluid inspections and top-ups, jump-starting a battery, and how to handle an emergency or accident.

Their shop, Ree's Automotive Care, has been in business for around five years. They are hoping their classes will have positive impact on road safety for their neighbors, and they see these classes as an opportunity for outreach into their community.



### An Example to Add Value, Increase Loyalty

Car care clinics are well-attended and provide exceptional after-sales value for car buyers. As well, loyalty is reinforced with these types of events. It creates a positive, memorable experience that owners will think of when they need their vehicle serviced.

### How Dealers Can Boost Value and Loyalty

- Host In-Person Events : Although the pandemic interferes with the ability to meet in larger groups, it won't last forever. Begin planning events to bring our customers and neighbors together. It adds community recognition and promotes a positive image.
- Create Value Added Content for All : If you haven't done so yet, create a YouTube channel. Post walkaround videos, technology walkthroughs, service how-to videos, and new model releases.
- Brag About Your Partners : Your dealership has wonderful relationships, and it does well to showcase them. Perhaps you partner with a local Line-X spray-in box liner shop or you do all your insurance business through one local agency. Create a campaign that shows them off, hopefully strengthening your relationship and helping them earn more business.
- Don't Expect Sales : Loyalty is in the details, not the sale. A loyal customer appreciates who their salesperson is, how they're treated in the service department, and the non-sales-oriented content in their inbox.

## How to build a service department that customers love



Customer retention continues to be a problem for auto dealerships. Less than 1 in 3 service visits are at dealerships once a vehicle reaches three years of age. The expectation of a superior customer service experience just isn't being realized. And when it comes to cost and convenience, customers are going elsewhere for their vehicle upkeep and repairs.

The primary desire for car owners visiting a service department is for a smooth, hassle-free, and convenient experience. Before trying to bring the WOW factor, perfect some customer experience staples.

### Easy Online Appointments, Confirmations

In some industries, an effective online booking service can add as much as 120% in revenue. For service departments, it's tricky to set up an online scheduler because of human variables. Regardless of how you execute the actual appointments, consumers expect convenient online booking. As well, confirmations are key. Whether you're emailing back an auto-responder or a call center employee is making calls, each appointment set online should have a response to confirm their time slot and services requested.

### Quick (and Safe) Check-In

As the pandemic drags on, more customers are taking precautions regarding physical distancing and safety. When they arrive in the service drive, an expedited check-in process that limits face-to-face time is key. For safe check-ins, more customers are turning to pick-up and delivery services. Not only is it convenient for customers, but it allows more time with the vehicle to upsell.

### Unintrusive Upsells

And with upsells, customers continue to want communication in the least disruptive way. Avoid annoying your service customers by confirming at check-in how they wish to receive communications. Text messages are often the top request.

### Always Fixed First Visit

The ultimate way to develop customers who love your dealership's service department is to ensure their vehicles are repaired or serviced properly on the first visit. In today's service climate where every additional visit is seen as a possibly risk or exposure, an unfixed issue is amplified. More than anything, customers love when their vehicle service is easy to arrange and completed accurately.

## New study shows consumers' motives for dealership service, key marketing tactics

The 2020 Dealership Service Retention Report found that the top factors that attract customers to service their vehicle at the dealership are the same that can repel them away. Almost 2,000 vehicle owners who service their vehicle at a dealership in some capacity were asked about their experiences and motivations. The purpose was to discover how best to connect with service customers, and the responses may not be surprising but reinforce how dealers can best serve their clientele.

### How customers choose their service provider

The DriveSure study asked participants to rank, in order of their perceived importance, six factors affecting where they choose to take their vehicle. From highest importance, the factors ranked: **Quality of work performed, Service pricing, Customer service quality, Timeliness, Location, and hours of operation**



### Room for growth identified

The 2020 Dealership Service Retention Report also identified several areas where dealers could expand their expertise. Across all age categories, online appointment booking is an amenity that customers value highly and dealers do well at, but there's certainly gaps in many dealers' schedulers. Surprisingly, free Wi-Fi in the waiting area and complimentary snacks are widely offered by dealers but not ranked high in importance among customers.

### How customers want to communicate

With big budgets being spent by dealers year after year, it's keen to know how customers prefer to hear from the dealership. This DriveSure study found that nearly 3 in 4 car owners prefer to have either a windshield sticker or an oil life monitor identify their next service interval, not a reminder call from the dealership.

### What dealers can take away

Again, the survey reinforces data from recent years, but the results indicate there's room for service departments to improve. Dealerships should ensure that Fixed First Visit is of utmost importance, followed closely by comparative cost analyses to accurately set pricing as well as providing a top-notch customer experience. Adjust your service department offerings to offer – and advertise – the amenities that your customers most desire. And avoid aggravating your loyal customers by communicating with them as they see fit, not what's most convenient for the dealer staff.