

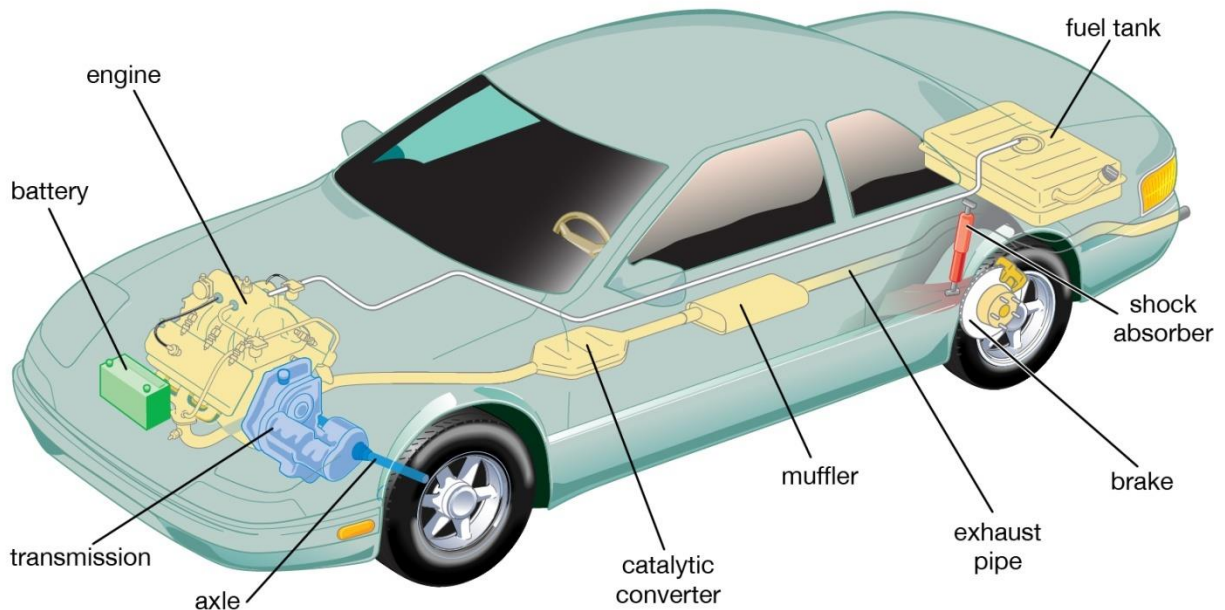
**SOS POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**  
**MBA FA 406(C)**  
**SUBJECT NAME: MARKETING SERVICES**

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**UNIT-V**

**TOPIC NAME: AUTOMOBILE SERVICE MARKETING**

**MEANING OF AUTOMOBILE:**



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A self-propelled vehicle used for transporting passengers, suitable for use on a street or roadway. Many different models of automobiles have been built and sold commercially, possessing varied features such as a retractable roof (in a convertible), different braking systems, different propulsion systems, and varied styling. Most models have four wheels but some have been built with three wheels. Automobiles are usually propelled by internal combustion engines (using volatile inflammable liquids, as gasoline or petrol, alcohol, naphtha, etc.), and sometimes by steam engines, or electric motors. The power of the driving motor varies from under 50 H. P. for earlier models to over 200 H. P. larger models or high-performance sports or racing cars. An automobile is commonly called a car or an auto, and generally in British usage, motor cars.

## AUTOMOBILE SERVICING:



A motor vehicle service or tune-up is a series of maintenance procedures carried out at a set time interval or after the vehicle has traveled a certain distance. The service intervals are specified by the vehicle manufacturer in a service schedule and some modern cars display the due date for the next service electronically on the instrument panel. A tune-up should not be confused with engine tuning, which is the modifying of an engine to perform better than the original specification, rather than using maintenance to keep the engine running as it should.

The completed services are usually recorded in a service book upon completion of each service. A complete service history usually adds to the resale value of a vehicle.

## **AUTOMOBILE SERVICE MARKETING:**

Here are six marketing ideas for auto repair shops that not only keep customers coming back.

### **1. A Car Advice Blog:**

In 2018, operating a website for your business is a given. Maintaining and updating that website is the challenge auto shop owners face. One way to drive visitors to your site is to start a car advice blog. If the content you produce provides direct value to your most-likely customers, consumers will revisit your website and maybe even subscribe. This gives you opportunities to inform them of specials, educate them about their vehicles, and remind them of services that their cars need (more on this last point later).

### **2. Social Media:**

Just like your website is a standard part of your auto shop's marketing, so is creating a social media presence. Consistent posting on Face book is essential to show those who hear about you that you're open and ready to help your customers. Pick a schedule and stick to it so that your followers (who are most likely also your customers) can learn when to expect new content from you. While you might post at a consistent time each day or each week, the possibilities for the type of content you post are limitless:

- coupons and special offers
- links to your blog
- customer testimonials
- helpful advice and recommendations for maintenance
- Recall information for major car manufacturers

An active page can inspire active conversations. People may comment on your posts or directly message your page. Your shop should have someone dedicated to answering these questions in a timely manner. The sooner you can reply, the more

likely it is prospects will get the answer they need and get their butt (in their car) to your shop.

Best of all, a social media strategy can be relatively inexpensive. It just requires consistency and regular attention.

### **3. Coupon Advertising:**

Coupons provide a low-cost, high-exposure option that draws new customers and reminds existing customers of the excellent service you provide. Offers you could use include:

- Half-off oil change
- Free oil change with purchase of an emission/safety test
- Free oil change with any repair of more than a certain dollar amount
- Free/reduced cost tire rotation with the purchase of another service
- A certain dollar amount off a specific service (e.g., \$25 off a tune up)
- A certain percentage off the cost of an overall bill

The key to making coupons work is getting them into the hands of the right people. Register tape advertising that appears on the back of grocery store receipts offers a perfect—and cost-effective—means of delivery. Because your auto shop coupon is placed on the backs of receipts at a grocery store that is close to your shop you will repeatedly deliver the coupon to people who are most likely to use your services. This method not only hyper-targets local customers you want to attract, but it also fits into virtually any auto shop marketing budget (reaching 1,000 customers can cost as little as \$6).

Contact us to learn more about grocery store coupon advertising for your auto repair shop.

### **4. Customer Referrals:**

Another sound marketing strategy for auto shop owners is to get your existing customers to do some marketing for you. Referral programs encourage customers to tell their friends and family about your great service and reward them with a free

oil change or a discounted service – an offer they can't get anywhere else. An exclusive incentive is a powerful motivator for customers who simply need to sing your praises to others to earn the reward.

### **5. Customer Loyalty Programs:**

People like free stuff. Offering a loyalty program that allows customers to earn free oil changes or other repair services is a great way to show appreciation to existing customers. This can be as simple and low-tech as a punch card that promises a free oil change after five paid oil changes, or as sophisticated as a points program in which customers earn a bonus after a certain amount of money spent on services. Loyalty programs provide an incentive for customers to keep visiting your auto shop and follow through on repairs that they may have been putting off. This results in more revenue for your business over time.

### **6. Service Reminders:**

The little stickers you put on customers' windshields are great reminders for them to come back for the next scheduled service. Many additional ways—digital stickers, so to speak—are available to provide that reminder, including emails, texts, and social media direct messages. Moreover, these service reminders can include a discount coupon for the service, links to your website and blog, or a way to confirm an appointment without actually having to call the shop. In this way, you are marketing to your customers without them even realizing it—they simply think you are reminding them about the next oil change or tire rotation

## **INTERNET MARKETING FOR AUTO SERVICE PROVIDERS:**

### **A. Auto service shop marketing as a science:**

There are some well-known auto service marketing strategies that have proven to work repeatedly. These auto service shop marketing ideas may not be completely innovative or new, and many are being used across the nation by all of the largest chains.

However, that's not a reason to shy away from these marketing methods. In fact, it's the perfect reason to embrace the tried-and-true auto service marketing tactics like the ones listed below.

### **1. Optimize your website:**

Many auto service centers that have been around for generations still don't have much of a web presence beyond customer ratings on geo-targeted sites run by companies like Yelp and Google.

However, this doesn't allow you to "own" your online messages, nor does it help interested customers quickly and easily get in touch with you.

That's why your website is essential. Your site serves as your home online, and should have all the information your customers need about your auto center, your services, and any specials you're running.

However, putting all of this information online doesn't guarantee that people will find it. That's where search engine optimization, or SEO, becomes extremely important. SEO involves improving your website to rank as high as possible in the results of search engines like Google, so that customers searching for "auto service center in Harrisburg," for example, can find you as easily as possible.

From there, your site should have a contact form that allows those in need of auto services to get in touch with you quickly and easily.

### **2. Be active on social media:**

You don't have to be on every social media channel, but it's definitely worth it to embrace at least two. Examples of social media platforms you could utilize would be Face book, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

You should post at least three times each week, and strive to make your posts conversational and educational instead of pushy.

Here are some ideas to help you get started:

- Share links to content about news in the auto industry
- Talk about seasonal car care needs
- Give advice for regular maintenance or fixes
- Share news or updates from your service center, like birthdays and other special events
- Post photos of special vehicles that come into your center (with permission, of course!)

Remind your customers that you have a Face book page, and that they should visit and follow it to stay in touch. This can be as easy as placing a small sign at your checkout counter, or printing your URL on any business cards or flyers you hand out.

### **3. Educate your customers:**

Once you have a website, adding a blog is a great way to attract visitors and help your customers. Blogs give you the opportunity to educate the people who trust you to work on their vehicles.

Plus, companies that have blogs have 97% more inbound links than companies that do not. Links are extremely valuable for SEO, because they allow your site to rank higher in search engine results.

After you create blog, you'll need to come up with some topics to write about. Fortunately, your posts don't have to be extensive to be meaningful and get you a reputation as an expert in your field. You can write articles about:

- How to change your windshield wipers or do other routine maintenance
- Cars that interest you
- Auto news that is happening around the globe
- What noises, vibrations, or visual changes in a car's appearance might mean
- When it might be time for a trip to the auto shop

These are just a few examples of content topics that you might utilize on your website. Not only will the posts on your blog help you look authoritative and trustworthy, they may also help you to rank higher in search engines for the topic that you're writing about, which is another way to bring in more local customers!

#### **4. Use email marketing to send reminders:**

Email can be the perfect way to ensure that your customers are keeping you in mind from month to month, and whenever they need maintenance on their cars.

Depending on the email marketing platform that your company uses, you can automatically send out emails remind existing customers when services like oil changes, tire rotations, and inspections are due.

#### **5. Create a loyalty program:**

Want to build a customer base that keeps loyal customers coming back for your services? Start a loyalty program!

This rewards patrons for choosing your auto service center and allows you to better manage your cash flow by providing a better semblance of predictability.

This program can provide one free oil change for every five paid changes, regular discounts, or coupons that can't be acquired anywhere else. It can also include free car washes, or any other perks your customers are interested in.



As a bonus, you can make this an email club as well. This means that in order to become a part of the loyalty program, the visitor has to provide their email address.

Email doesn't just make it easier to hand out rewards, but it's a hugely profitable way to keep your business "top of mind," and send out regular messages that will get more and more clients coming back to your location.

## **6. Get involved in the community:**

In order to remind people of your presence, it may be a good idea to sponsor a local sports team, give money to a well-recognized charity, or perform some other action that supports the community in which you operate.

Not only is this a socially responsible thing to do, but it can help you build a positive reputation with your customers. Plus, if any of the events you sponsor are covered on local news sites, you have the opportunity to earn a link from a well-respected publication.

## **B. Marketing your service center is crucial:**

While auto service center marketing strategies don't need to be complicated, they must be consistent and well-planned. It's not enough to sit back and expect word of mouth to do the job for you.

Marketing your auto service center is the best way to be certain that you continue to earn an income month after month.

However, if you're busy trying to run your business, you may have a hard time justifying the time that needs to be spent on marketing it. Striking a balance between operating and marketing may require help from someone more experienced.