

ShopTalk



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September 2015

In This Issue:

- How to Lose Good Customers
- Buying Personalities

Upcoming Classes:

Shop Owner

Align Your Shop for Profit

October 7, 8 & 9

November 11, 12 & 13

A.B.M. "Always Be Marketing"

October 14, 15 & 16

November 4, 5 & 6

Leadership Mastery

October 28, 29 & 30

Staffing & Hiring

November 9 & 10

Service Advisor

The Role of the Service Advisor

October 5 & 6

November 16 & 17

November 30 & December 1

The Role of the Service Advisor- West Coast

October 15 & 16

Service Manager Course

October 12 & 13

ATI's 7 Step Sales Process

October 26 & 27

November 23 & 24

ATI's 7 Step Sales Process West Coast

November 5 & 6

Collision Course

Collision Repair Production

October 19 & 20

Keys to a Successful Collision Repair Business

October 7, 8 & 9

A.B.M. "Always Be Marketing"

November 11, 12 & 13

Estimating & Sales Course 1

November 9 & 10

Collision Repair Production

November 16 & 17

Car Care Month Is Coming! Are You Ready?

by Mike Haley, ATI Team Leader

What if I told you there is an event you can do in October to bring in new customers, get reacquainted with old customers and provide a community service. Would you want it? If I told you this event has national recognition and sponsorship. This event already exists and it is the Car Care Month performed every year in October and April. The Car Care Council was developed to help educate consumers on the second largest investment they have, their vehicles. Car Care offers everything you need to help schedule, plan and promote your event.

For a fee of \$49 (tax deductible) you will receive your car care kit which includes all the point of sale tools needed to have a successful event. www.carcare.org



Good Help Might Be Hard to Find, but Your Search Could Win You Lunch With Chubby!

Kim Hickey ATI Coach

The old adage "Good help is hard to find" seems to be the theme of many of our coaching calls lately. There are many facets to the "employee portion" of our business that are very important — but catching the attention of a potential employee may be one of the most important ones. How many times have you placed the same old tired ads? When was the last time you saw an ad that caught your eye?



Since we have the best and brightest shop owners in the world, we thought who better to ask for fresh, eye-catching employment ads. We are going to have a contest for the best ad in two categories. Not only do we want to see your entries for a written ad, but we want to see your ideas for video ads too. Mike Haley will be the judge and the winners will not only get to have bragging rights and be recognized in our newsletter, but they will also get to have lunch with Chubby!

To help you get started, I asked Mike Haley to give me some tips to share with you and also included a couple of great ads. According to Mike: *(continued on page 4)*

Sam's Corner

This month's Sam's Corner article really hits a nerve with me, and I suggest everyone read Eric Twiggs' quick suggestions on why some of our clients have price objections and why some rarely do. I have always had my own opinion on this; but Eric effectively compares how service advisor skills really cause the problem, versus all the myths many of us have thought about in our careers.

Chris "Chubby" Frederick

How to Lose Your Good Customers Over Price

Eric Twiggs
ATI Coach

"I'm losing business because of the pricing matrix!" This statement was made by a shop owner named Rich, during our weekly coaching call. Both his car count and his average repair order (ARO) were down from the previous year.

He had two service writers named Steve and Chris. Even though they had the same invoice count, Steve held a 61 percent parts margin and a \$400 ARO, while Chris hovered around 45 percent and \$230.

I had Rich make the "Where have you been?" calls to determine why people weren't coming back. He spoke to 10 customers, five from each writer.

As suspected, he got feedback stating that he was too expensive. Four previously loyal customers mentioned finding another shop with lower prices. Which seller do you think had the most complaints?

If you guessed Steve, guess again! None of his patrons mentioned the price. They had good things to say about him and the service. All of the complaints came from Chris' customers.

Why would Chris' clientele complain even though Steve was charging more? Keep reading and you will learn two ways to lose your good customers over price.

• **Only mention what's wrong** — Chris would only talk about what needed to be repaired on the vehicle. Steve began his presentations by mentioning the positive findings from the courtesy check. Steve's people felt their vehicle was worth investing in, while Chris often heard the following: "I'm getting rid of the car, so why spend the money?" If the buyer feels the value, they will pay the price! They have to value your service and their vehicle.

• **Don't do show and tell** — Steve did a vehicle walk-around with everyone, which enabled him to show the worn tires and wiper blades. He experienced less resistance because he and the customer had the evidence in front of them. Chris didn't take the time to go out to the car. Besides, "his customers" didn't like going back outside

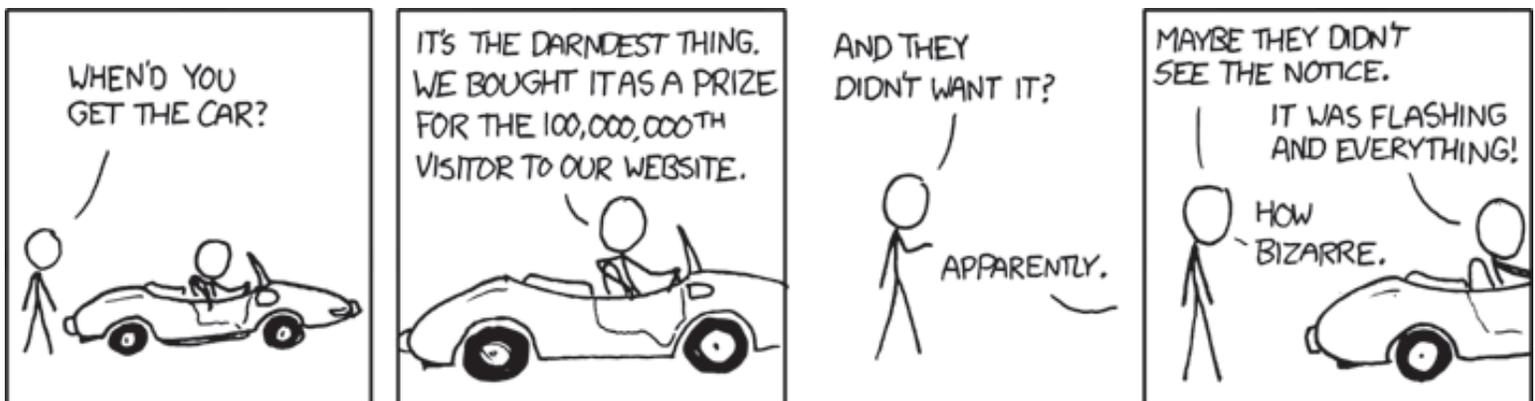
If you only mention what's wrong, and refuse to do show and tell, you will end up with the same results as Chris

Several weeks later, Rich terminated Chris, replacing him with a restaurant industry veteran. As a result, the price complaints decreased and the margins increased!

Have you been hearing more price objections lately? Pay close attention to how your writer is communicating the value of both your service and the vehicles

—Chubby

C. L. Frederick



If you don't look back at your car when you walk away from it, you are driving the wrong car.

The Coach's Corner

BUYING PERSONALITIES

José Cruz Sr., ATI Coach

Our instructor, Randy Somers, spends quite a bit of time with your advisors going over buying personalities and the different ways and techniques to sell to them. Determining your customers' buying personalities is a crucial part of the "Cradle to Grave" process. Simply put, when you figure out a customer's buying personality, you then can figure out how to sell to that customer. Sales are made on emotion. No matter how much someone researches a purchase, there is always something that sways the purchase one way or another. It is your service advisor's job to determine what causes that "sway" in your customers. (All of your advisors should have a laminated copy of the "Seven Step Sales Process" at their desk — which includes a list of the five buying personalities. Before you read any further, I would suggest you go and look at your advisor's desk, and make sure it is there.)

Once the buying personality is determined, it should be noted somewhere in the customer's file. This is not to replace the walk around and reevaluating the customer's buying personality when they come in each visit, but it will remind you of what they previously have been. Some shops use the traditional buying personality monikers of performance, fear, simple and easy, basic transportation, and quality. Other shops use different words with similar meanings. You could also assign a letter or number to each personality. Regardless of what name or code you assign to the buying personality, find a sortable/trackable field in your customer's record to post it. You want to be able to run a report based on each buying personality.

MARKET TO BUYING PERSONALITY

Once you have determined your customers' buying personalities, you can use them not only to sell to your customers at the counter, but you can use the same information to market to them. If you understand how important it is to sell to each personality type differently, don't you think it is equally important to market to each buying personality differently?

Let's use a suspension promotion as an example. If you were marketing to the "fear" personality type, your suspension ad would center around ensuring the safety of their vehicle and how worn suspension affects safety, the ability to stop, the ability to swerve and recover properly, etc. If you were marketing to the "performance" personality type, your suspension ad would center around handling, hugging the curves of the road, great vehicle response, etc. If you wouldn't sell to the fear and the performance customer the same way at the counter, why would you market to them the same?

Start by building a promotion/ad on a specific product or service. Pick one buying personality type and envision how you would sell that product or service to them at the counter. Include any logos or pictures, discounts or pricing, and features and benefits that you would like to highlight about the product as you normally would. Sort your customer list by that buying personality type and send an email blast (or print and mail) to the customers on that list. Now pick a different buying personality. Envision how you would sell that product or service to them at the counter and rearrange the features and benefits to reflect what the buying personality you are currently focusing on would respond to. Sort your list by that buying personality, etc.

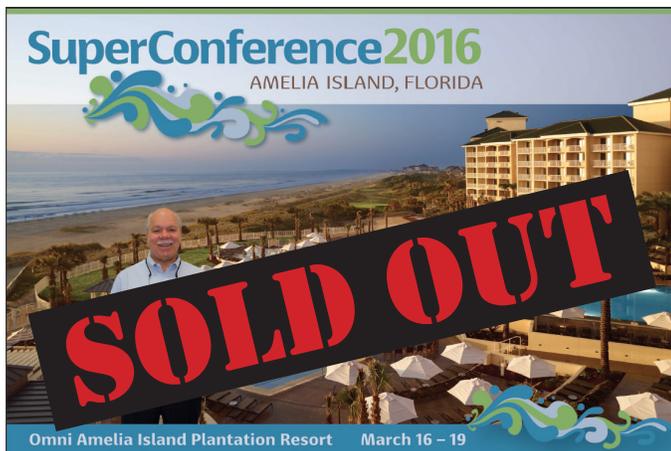
You can do the same kind of thing to target other customer types. For instance, in some areas of the country, there are large pockets of very low-mileage vehicles. If you code the drivers of those vehicles in a sortable manner (check your POS software to see if you can pull reports by mileage — most of them will do that today), you can then market specifically to the "low-mileage" driver. Build your promotion/ad around acknowledging the low mileage and focus on the products or services that are affected by age. If your customer has driven 3,000 miles in six years, getting a generic ad is probably not going to catch their attention.

There is no limit to the different ways you can market to your customers. Make sure you track your results.



SuperConference 2016 SOLD OUT!

All of us at ATI want to thank you for your continued support and trust for our SuperConference events. This is the first year you have helped us to sell out in summer within weeks of the announcement. If you would like to be on our wait list please call Helen at 301-575-9127. Chubby



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(continued from page 1)

1. Your ad should start with an attention getter. Your heading should address their pain or reason for looking.
2. WIIFM — What's in it for me? List all the benefits. Mike suggests that you write drunk and edit sober.
3. What do they need to bring to the table? What are you looking for?
4. Don't be afraid to be creative — add pictures.

Tips from me:

1. Remember that anything you post online is a virtual representation of you and your shop. You want to keep in mind that someone who is not familiar with your business is going to form an impression about your business from your ad.
2. There can be a fine line between portraying your shop as a place where people love to work and a place where people goof off and don't take their jobs seriously. We want to attract professionals.

Placing a great ad is only the beginning. For interviewing techniques, HR guidelines, employee retention, signing bonus ideas, etc., make sure you register for our Staffing and Hiring class. For employee accountability and culture building techniques, make sure you register for our Leadership class.

Please submit your entries to khickey@autotraining.net no later than October 1, 2015. Winners will be posted in our November newsletter.



Toole's Garage

February 6 · 🌐

Recruitment ad - PLEASE SHARE!

Want to work with these happy people? Click the link below to apply!

Do you wear a a cape on your shoulders and an "S" on your chest at work, Super(wo)man?

Are you a powerfully proficient problem solver and a pleasant, peppy, playful, people person?

Are you totally chill while all those around you are, like, freaking out?

Then we are freaking out because we want to talk to you!

We are Toole's Garage, a fast-growing and beautiful auto repair shop in beautiful San Carlos, California and we are searching for a fast thinking, hard working person with a great spirit and a happy soul to grow beautifully with us!

We are looking for one part Customer Service Superhero, one part Organizational Glue that holds everything together and all parts AWESOME!

Know something about cars? Coolio, but not necessary. Know a lot about people? BOOM! You're halfway there!

Forget about the "auto repair" part. If you have sick customer care skills and a proven track record of being successful glue, click the link below to apply. Thank you!

<http://sfbay.craigslist.org/pen/csr/4880521600.html>