

REVMO

# 5 Ways to Keep Your Auto Shop Clients from Wanting to Run You Over



## The Road to Customer Satisfaction: Why It's the Ultimate Destination for Your Auto Shop

What do cheese, wine, wisdom and friendships have in common? They all — with a few exceptions — get better with age.

Unfortunately, cars aren't so lucky. Although today's vehicles should be capable of at least 200,000 miles, chances are your dream drive is going to need more repairs the older it gets. The shocks and struts of the supercool sports car won't last forever, nor will the suspension parts on the sleek SUV just paid off.

Personal and commercial cars, trucks, vans, and other assorted motor vehicles on the United States' roadways now [average 12.6 years old](#). That means America's auto shops should be staying busy, especially considering the [shortage of technicians](#).






Higher demand, however, doesn't ensure a full schedule or repeat customers. The real secret? Satisfied customers who turn your shop into their go-to for all things automotive.

Providing top-tier customer service isn't automatic — especially when you're tasked with finding and tracking affordable parts and supplies, hiring and retaining responsible technicians, and keeping overhead costs low in a rough economy.

Sure, knowing the (lug)nuts and bolts of vehicle repairs is essential for your shop's success, but equally important are clear communication, transparency, consistent quality, and unwavering professionalism.

Don't just take our word for it, though. Studies have shown that [80 percent of customers believe](#) the experience a company provides is just as important as its products or services, and 61 percent of consumers will pay [at least five percent more](#) if they know they'll have a positive experience. So, give them that smooth ride — and watch your profits shift into high gear!

That's why we've provided you with a detailed roadmap to make sure your customers aren't leaving you in the dust:

-  **Strategy 1**  
Steering Your Auto Shop to Success with Clear Communication
-  **Strategy 2**  
No Hidden Fees, No Speed Bumps: Driving Trust with Transparent Pricing
-  **Strategy 3**  
Under the Hood: How Consistent Quality Drives Repeat Business
-  **Strategy 4**  
Polish Your Shop's Reputation: Why Timeliness and Professionalism Change Everything
-  **Strategy 5**  
Rev Up Your Loyalty Program: Keep Clients Coming Back for More

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**61% of customers will pay 5% more if they know they'll have a positive experience.**

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STRATEGY 1

# Steering Your Auto Shop to Success

*With Clear Communication*

## Steering Your Auto Shop to Success with Clear Communication

They say “Communication is the bridge between confusion and clarity.” For your auto shop, that bridge is built by setting clear expectations from the moment a customer walks in.

Your staff should be prepared to deliver not only exceptional customer service but also clear, straightforward explanations of the services you’re offering and their costs. Break down the “what” and “why” of each repair, and let customers know which fixes are urgent and which can wait until the next appointment.

Actively listen to your customers’ concerns, and avoid technical jargon they might not understand. Slip differentials, torque converters, and serpentine belts probably aren’t part of many auto owners’ lexicons.

Give your customers a verbal and written estimate, and avoid any surprise charges or hidden fees. No blinker fluid, muffler bearings, or horn oil, please. By being upfront about costs—parts and labor—you’ll keep customers from speeding off in frustration.

### Regular Updates: Keeping Customer in the Loop

The [average cost per service visit](#) has jumped roughly 20 percent, with consumers now shelling out an [average of \\$548.32](#) to get their automobiles fixed. Even the time it takes to get a vehicle repaired has risen. Primarily due to parts and labor shortages, the average time it takes to get an appointment at an auto repair shop has increased from [1.8 days in 2021](#) to 5.2 in 2024.

Be prepared to explain to customers complaining of sticker shock and wait times about the reasons behind them. Promptly and proactively letting your customers know can go a long way in curbing unrealistic expectations. According to a [study from J.D. Power](#), customers strongly prefer service updates via text (68 percent) instead of receiving a phone call (16 percent).

Real-time communication with your customers might sound too time-consuming for an auto shop already inundated with vehicles ready for repairs. However, employing automation via a customer intent platform enables you to provide timely updates and alerts on parts availability, repair progress, and service status. Such tools also give you better visibility and control over communication, allowing you to quickly adjust your customer service strategy if things aren’t going as planned.



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## Handling Difficult Conversations

Dealing with a crabby customer who's ready to blow a gasket? It's natural for employees to feel frustrated, but keeping cool under pressure is key to resolving complaints effectively.

Beyond knowing how to fix any vehicle, your staff should be trained to listen carefully to customer concerns and provide a fair solution. Whether they're being accused of missing a repair, pushing unnecessary services, or not being upfront about delays, getting the full story before responding is crucial.

Establish a standardized process for handling complaints that includes these key steps:

- Let the customer express their frustrations without interruption.
- Avoid dismissing the complaint, even if it seems minor.
- Be honest throughout the conversation.
- Show empathy and understanding.
- Restate the issue to confirm you've understood it correctly.
- Avoid placing blame on the customer or your employees.

- Ask how the customer would like to see the issue resolved.
- Keep them updated as you work toward a solution.
- Offer a complimentary service to rebuild trust.
- Follow up after the issue is resolved to ensure satisfaction.

Consumers spend an [average of 50 hours](#) having an automobile serviced during the time of ownership, so it's unrealistic to think you're going to avoid angry outbursts from frustrated drivers. However, handling these situations the right way strengthens customer loyalty and builds your shop's reputation for reliability.

Leveraging automation in your shop can streamline how you manage and address customer complaints. Faster response times, paired with a sound communication strategy, ensure you're keeping customers happy and preventing dissatisfaction from getting out of control.

Employing automation via a customer intent platform enables you to provide timely updates and alerts on parts availability, repair progress, and service status.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands on a steering wheel, driving a car. The person is wearing a light-colored, long-sleeved shirt. The background shows a blurred view of a building and some greenery through the car window. The overall tone is professional and focused.

STRATEGY 2

# No Hidden Fees, No Speed Bumps

*Driving Trust with Transparent Pricing*

## Driving Trust With Transparent Pricing

Nurses, veterinarians, and engineers rank among America's most trusted professions. Auto mechanics? Not quite—at least, not yet. But maybe they just haven't met you.

More than [75 percent of drivers](#) report not always trusting their mechanics, largely due to a lack of transparency. It's no surprise that four out of five consumers say transparency is "very important" when choosing an automotive repair shop.

The power of transparency can't be overstated — it's the foundation of customer trust. It involves clear pricing, open communication, and honest repair recommendations. By offering thorough service that reduces disputes, builds loyalty, and enhances your reputation, you also educate customers on the best care for their vehicle.

Providing your customers with a detailed, written estimate shows that you make transparency a priority. Approximately 70 percent of customers are worried about being overcharged for repairs, but by documenting an explanation of the work that has to be done, the costs of materials and labor, and any extra charges or fees, you build instant trust and credibility.

Another best practice is to give your customers a statement that the quoted amount won't be exceeded by a specified dollar amount or percentage without their prior approval. In some states, giving customers an estimate before you begin working on their vehicle isn't only recommended — it's the law. Colorado, Illinois, Wisconsin, Massachusetts, Ohio, and Georgia all require auto shops to provide estimates before opening that hood to start repairs.

## Avoiding the Upsell Trap

A staggering [76 percent](#) of customers believe auto repair shops are likely to recommend unnecessary services just to make more money. Referred to as upselling, it's a frustrating practice that is sure to drive customers away.

Recommending preventive maintenance to extend a vehicle's life isn't upselling — as long as it's done right. For example, showing a customer the low tread on his or her tires and presenting new ones as a safety suggestion might make the difference in avoiding an accident on a slippery side road.

Instead of suggesting an engine overhaul for an '08 Impala just because it's running a bit loud, explain what's causing the noise and the possible consequences of ignoring it. Racing to retrieve more money from your customers through unnecessary repairs is not only unethical but could put a big dent in your customer base.

It's also quite clear that customers may not always remember every repair or the importance of upcoming maintenance. A customer intent platform helps you track these services and send automated reminders for preventive maintenance, ensuring nothing falls through the cracks.

By staying proactive with reminders and being transparent in your communication, you not only build trust but also keep your customers' vehicles running smoothly — and keep them coming back to your shop.

# 75%

of drivers report not always trusting their mechanics.

# 70%

of customers are worried about being overcharged for repairs.

# 76%

of customers believe auto shops are likely to upsell

STRATEGY 3

# Under the Hood

*Consistent Quality Drives  
Repeat Business*





## How Consistent Quality Drives Repeat Business


When you hear “a culture of quality,” you might think of something similar to an exclusive art exhibit. It paints the picture of high-cost products, painstakingly created by someone with a distinct attention to detail.

A culture of quality isn't relegated to the arts, though — it's about creating a business environment achieved through a proactive focus on high-caliber service, and pride in workmanship. When you own an auto shop, it's about establishing and maintaining a level of quality control that ensures every repair meets the highest standards.

The first step in building this culture is implementing a robust training program. It should focus on technical skills, safety protocols and, yes, customer service. Continuous education, certifications, and providing your staff with the right tools — both literal and figurative — ensure they perform at their best.

The second key to quality control is partnering with suppliers you trust. Ordering parts from a vendor known for delays won't speed up your repair process — instead, it will lead to longer wait times for your customers, a surefire recipe for dissatisfaction.

The third crucial component in a culture of quality is promoting a positive work environment for your team of technicians. Almost [60 percent of automotive technicians](#) voted that the shop's work environment is more important to them than compensation, career development, or benefits.



A culture of quality is about creating a business environment achieved through a proactive focus on high-caliber service.

How do you create a positive work culture for your employees? Start by encouraging pride in workmanship, fostering open communication, and offering recognition. Actively seeking employee feedback and setting clear goals will also boost morale and performance.

A positive work culture has benefits beyond employee satisfaction. It increases productivity, improves customer service, and reduces turnover. It also helps you attract skilled technicians, maintain safety standards, and build a strong reputation for reliability.

## Preventing Recurring Issues

Even the most well-trained automotive technicians make mistakes. It's preventing those mistakes from reoccurring that makes — or “brakes” — a successful auto repair shop.

Investing in thorough diagnostics allows you to identify a wide range of issues — from engine and electrical



problems to transmission and emissions concerns. More importantly, it helps prevent future problems for your customers that can pave the way for you to lose them to a competitor.

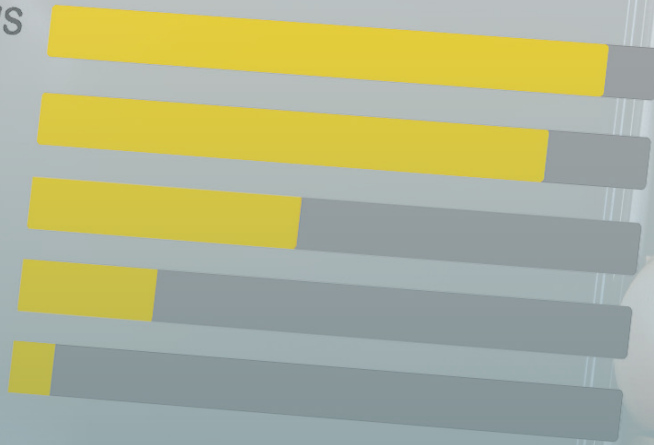
Diagnostics also add a layer of transparency by providing a clear, visual explanation of what's wrong. This allows you to fix issues before they escalate, helping you and your team make informed decisions, improve overall performance, and reduce costly errors.

While nothing is foolproof, offering warranties builds customer confidence in your work. The average shop owner typically warranties their repairs for [one year or 12,000 miles](#), but you can customize a program based on your business. Either way, a warranty guarantees that its eligible services will be defect-free for a predetermined amount of time, building yet another level of trust with your customers.



CUSTOMER REVIEWS

4.6



★★★★★  
Nice service

★★★★★  
Good !

★★★★★  
Excellent

★★★★★  
Not bad

★★★★★  
I'll come again

STRATEGY 4

# Polish Your Shop's Reputation

*Why Timeliness and Professionalism Change Everything*



## Why Timeliness and Professionalism Change Everything

With [279 million private and commercial vehicles](#) on U.S. roads and only 239,100 auto repair and maintenance centers in the country, delays are inevitable. While delays can fuel frustration, preparing customers for them can lead to a more positive experience. Avoid overbooking, and never promise more than you can deliver.

Ultimately, your goal is complete customer satisfaction. Sometimes, that's as simple as offering small amenities. A [J.D. Power survey](#) found that customer satisfaction is higher when complimentary snacks/beverages are offered, a device charging station is available, and a workspace to plug in computers is accessible.

Today's consumers expect convenience, and digital tools help you deliver it — with most customers [strongly preferring](#) service updates via text rather than phone calls.

A customer intent platform could automate time-consuming tasks like scheduling, invoicing, payment processing, and service updates. Streamlining these processes boosts efficiency and gives you real-time insights into potential bottlenecks, such as equipment issues or inventory shortages, allowing you to address them before they impact your operations.

Implementing a task management system also frees up time to focus on quality control and customer service. By quickly generating accurate estimates, assigning repair tasks, and sending automated service reminders, you'll deliver a seamless, professional experience that keeps customers coming back.

U.S. businesses risk losing  
**\$856B**  
annually due to poor  
customer service

## The Impact of Rude or Unprofessional Behavior

No one is perfect. Owning up to your mistakes, however, allows you to avoid veering off in the wrong direction — straight toward angry customers.

Although uncommon, some auto repair professionals have been known to take shortcuts. Misdiagnosing a vehicle's problem, skipping road tests, or rushing repairs can lead to high customer churn, increased operational costs, a damaged reputation, lost revenue, and poor employee morale.

After a negative experience, [more than half](#) of consumers reduce or stop spending with that business entirely. U.S. businesses risk losing [\\$856 billion annually](#) because of poor customer service, largely due to the power of word-of-mouth referrals.

Maintaining professionalism under pressure is essential to keeping loyal customers and attracting new ones. To do so, follow a standardized process similar to handling complaints: be honest about mistakes, show empathy, avoid blaming employees, and offer a discount or complimentary service to rebuild trust and maintain transparency.



STRATEGY 5

# Rev Up Your Loyalty Program

*Keep Clients Coming  
Back for More*

## Keep Clients Coming Back for More

A satisfied customer is a loyal customer, and if you've built a loyal customer base, you're definitely doing something right.

Rewarding those who keep coming back for more doesn't only benefit them—it benefits your business too. A loyal customer base spends one-third more than new customers. With existing customers, there is a [60 to 70 percent chance](#) of proceeding with a repair compared to five to 20 percent with a new one.

Have you considered implementing a loyalty program for your customers? Whether it's a membership, subscription model, or simple punch cards offering discounts on services like oil changes, tire rotations, or brake repairs, these programs encourage repeat visits and increase your shop's customer lifetime value.

You can even introduce gamification, where loyalty activities become a game. The more your customers engage, the more rewards they earn. This often spurs customers' competitive nature while offering a sense of achievement, giving them even more incentive to stay connected with your shop.

## Staying Connected Beyond the Repair

Running an auto repair shop requires long hours and lots of greasy, dirty work. It's easy to forget to follow up with customers once they leave.

It's understandable, sure, but you're missing a crucial opportunity to show appreciation for their business. In today's world, customers expect personalization and convenience - to stand out from your competitors, you need to differentiate your shop by staying connected.

Leverage customer data from service histories and loyalty program redemptions to tailor personalized messages and offers. Automating this process allows you to easily stay in touch with clients after their service—whether through texts, calls, emails, or surveys.

A simple “thank you” goes a long way, but offering perks like priority scheduling or complimentary vehicle inspections can be even more impactful. Actively seeking customer feedback shows you value their input and demonstrates your commitment to top-notch service.

A satisfied customer  
is a loyal customer.



An aerial photograph of a dark, wet beach with a winding path of sand and water leading towards the ocean. The sky is overcast and grey. A solid green horizontal bar is positioned at the top left of the image, partially overlapping the text area.

# Turn Your Customers Into Advocates: The Ultimate Key to Success

Building a reputation for unparalleled customer service starts with cultivating a positive workplace culture and clear, consistent communication. It extends all the way to meaningful customer follow-ups.

Turning your customers into loyal advocates happens through transparency, a commitment to quality, professionalism, and staying connected beyond the repair. By continuously improving your customer service using best practices and feedback, you'll keep your auto shop ahead of the competition and on the road to long-term success in no time while staying ahead in this ultra-competitive industry.