

Service satisfaction is high, now's it's time to make your website a service seller By Gary Simmons

In August of last year, Consumer Affairs ran an article that should please every dealer: Car Dealers Improve Service Performance. According to the J.D. Powers and Associates 2006 Service Usage and Retention Study (SURS), 86% of owners who took their vehicles to the dealership for a repair indicated that the work was done right the first time, and 87% said the dealership had their vehicle ready when promised.

These results prove that you are doing an exemplary job once a vehicle arrives at your service bay, but what about before the vehicle hits your store? A big part of service, especially for the fast-growing segment of technologically-savvy consumers, is what you offer on your website to make the scheduling and service process easy, fast, and streamlined. Read on for a few suggestions of how to improve your website for customers, and in the process potentially boost service sales.

The Drop-Down Cost Menu

As consumers become more technologically savvy, you have to ensure your dealership keeps pace with a comprehensive, detailed website that includes a service page. Service customers are heading to your website for information, so give them what they want with a drop-down menu of all manufacturer's recommended maintenance for all the vehicles you service. Go one step further and include an estimated cost for performing each service at your dealership. As an added benefit for you, this ensures your compliancy because you and your dealership team are all stating the same manufacturer's recommendations, meaning you can sleep easier at night. For your customers, this is a quick and easy way to put information at the fingertips of everyone visiting your website. A full listing of your offerings is also a simple way to market all of your services.

Service Audio and Video Clips

Taking a vehicle in for service can feel like bellying up to a blackjack table in Vegas: you don't know what cards the dealer will draw, you just hope they're in your favor. If you could predict the dealer's hand, you would feel more confident playing the game. The same theory applies to posting service audio and video clips on your website. When you post clips, you remove the elements of mystery and chance; customers know what a service entails, what will be done, and how. The ability to watch an unfamiliar service being performed, or to hear an account of how it's done, may also spur customers to ask for more details, or even request the service.

Fast, Easily Navigable, and Informative Service Page

To sell more services, your website has to be chock-full of information, fast to upload, and easy to search through. If you have a cumbersome and slow site, you'll lose customers to a competitor. A webpage stocked with information encourages customers to explore. They may come to your site because they need an oil-change, but in looking around may decide to go ahead and get additional services because the price is so reasonable. Turn one service into two or three with a comprehensive and easy to navigate website.

Consumers are predominately happy with service performance, so now is the time to tweak your website so it functions as a service seller. Turn your service page into a wealth of knowledge for increased customer satisfaction, and you may just increase revenue as well.

Contributed article
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