

## 12 Auto Repair Marketing Strategies to Bring in More Customers

*Maximizing shop profits with marketing techniques that win new and repeat business*

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When you launched your shop, you likely employed multiple strategies to share the news of your business. That initial marketing is immensely valuable, particularly for attracting new customers. But over time, it is natural to hit a plateau, and casting a wider net that can reach both new and existing customers becomes invaluable.

Below are 12 top marketing strategies to reach all your potential audiences – from existing to new customers:

### Attract New Customers

Attracting new customers in your first few months as a business owner can be intuitive. However, it's important to stay consistent in attracting new customers rather than relying solely on the group of existing customers you already have. Below are some strategies specifically designed to attract new customers, whether you are a new business or have been in the local community for years:

#### 1. Get Involved In Your Community

One of the most fulfilling and exciting ways to attract new customers is to get involved in your local community. Your involvement can range from supporting a your city's high school to raising money for a local nonprofit, like [Casey's Automotive](#) did for [Ellie's Hats](#). This strategy allows you to not only expose the business to potential new customers, but also to make a positive impact on the people and places you call home.

#### 2. Run Special Promotions For First-Time Customers

First-time customers can be drawn in with special promotions specifically targeting them, such as an oil change special. These promotions are simple to run and track, and first-time customers will have positive reactions. As you prepare for a special, make sure the discounts you offer don't cut into your margins and cause you to lose profit.

#### 3. Partner With An Adjacent Local Business

One of the most effective ways to generate new customers is to partner with another local business – one that is reliable, reputable and a good reflection on your own business. Together, you can create a mutually beneficial relationship that enables them to refer their customers to you, and vice versa.

#### 4. Advertise Locally

Advertising locally is one of the most effective techniques to draw new customers into your shop. There are several local avenues you can advertise through – including your local paper, school mailers, sports programs, small magazines and more. No matter which avenue you choose, make sure to research ad rates and other benefits to weigh against your overall budget.

#### 5. Run Targeted Social Media Ads

Paid social campaigns can help you reach new customers that you otherwise might not have reached organically. Through sponsored content (your usual post, but boosted to key audiences) and visual ads, you can reach the right demographics for your shop. There are several important factors to consider, such as:

- Paid social media ad goals
- Budget
- Target demographic
- Time frame

If it is a fit for you, you might consider working with a social media expert to execute this strategy successfully.

## 6. Up Your Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Game

Understanding and applying an effective SEO strategy can be one of the strongest marketing strategies. SEO can be summarized as well-written, authoritative content that supports a business's Google ranking to bring in more unpaid web traffic. More simply put, it helps make your business appear higher in the Google listings when someone searches a key word in your area.

The first step you should take to improve SEO is to list your business on Google in the first place, then regularly update your website with new content. Additionally, optimize existing content to target specific keywords. These keywords should reflect your location or type of work, such as "BMW repair Katy" or "auto repair [your city]." With a narrower focus, you'll maximize the chances of potential customers in your area finding you. Like with targeted social media ads, this marketing strategy can become highly complicated, and you may consider working with an expert for guidance if your budget allows.

## Retain Existing Customers

In addition to attracting new customers, you also want to employ strategies that help retain existing customers and increase loyalty.

### 1. Sell Declined Jobs

The easiest way to get more business from existing customers is to remind them of repairs and maintenance work that may be needed soon, including work they had previously declined. This approach spotlights your team's attentiveness and diligence. It also instills familiarity and consistency as customers will likely want to return to a shop that already has background knowledge on their vehicle.

### 2. Give Them Something to Take Home Each Visit

Customers enjoy reliable information they can take and review at home, such as fliers or pamphlets. These materials not only give customers crucial information to keep a vehicle running smoothly – such as "Engine Maintenance Best Practices" or "What to do When You Have a Flat Tire" – they also include your business's name and logo that serves as a reminder to return to you when they need service.

### 3. Send Holiday Gifts or Other Timely Gifts

Giving small gifts to your customers during holidays, birthdays or other times of the year is a great way to show them that you appreciate their business – *and* earn some free advertising as an added bonus. Potential gifts you might consider include:

- Tire pressure gauges
- Sunglasses

- Glove-compartment friendly first aid kit
- Coffee mugs

#### 4. Create a Loyalty Program

Establish a loyalty program that is relevant to your shop and customers, such as a “perks-based” program that offers access to additional materials, or a “points-based” program that offers customers a certain discount after they achieve enough points. No matter what type it is, ensure that your loyalty program offers your customers important benefits that keep them coming back to your business for service.

#### 5. Create a Referral Challenge

One of the best ways to give *and* receive is to create a referral challenge that incentivizes existing customers to refer people to your shop for a reward. This program should be attractive to customers, as well as easy to track on the back end. This is great for your own data measurements to determine who your most loyal customers are – and why they keep coming back.

#### 6. Give Customers More Ways to Engage Online

Creating engaging online content – or articles - for your customers might be the most complex of marketing strategies. This requires determining the content type to establishing a platform. Some content ideas include:

- Social media testimonials from satisfied customers
- “Day-in-the-life” posts that showcase what goes on in your shop from your perspective or a technician’s
- E-newsletters with fun shop updates and vehicle knowledge
- Applicable “how-to” videos for sticky situations, such as flat tires

### **Experiment and Stick to What Works Best**

This list of potential strategies can be overwhelming, particularly if you don’t know where to start. While it is important to establish a well-rounded, multi-pronged approach, you don’t have to start them all at once. In fact, it can be just as beneficial to pick a few key techniques to begin implementing, and focus your effort on those priorities to promote your shop.

Ultimately, no matter what options you decide to use, remember to put a process in place for [tracking their results](#). With regular, careful analysis of the results, you’ll put your shop in the best possible position to generate more profits as cost-efficiently as possible.