

Tips For Auto Repair Shops Responding to the Coronavirus

1. Start by making sure you have sanitizer, and that all relative contact points are constantly sanitized throughout each day. Phones, keyboards, water fountains, door handles, restrooms, handheld equipment, etc. all need to be addressed.
2. Ensure that all of your employees wash their hands on a regular basis, and that they do so in a manner that is in line with the Center for Disease Control's recommendations.
3. Send out an email to your customers letting them know that you've always been attuned to their safety, and to preventing their exposure to any air or contact borne bacteria or viruses. This includes letting your customers know that you've historically told your employees to stay home if they have any cold or flu-like symptoms. Go on to tell them how you sanitize your shop, and every vehicle that comes into your shop. You should include language that addresses seat covers, steering wheel covers, floor mats and how you wipe down the door handles, gear shift handles, etc. with a sanitizer before the vehicle is returned to the client.
4. Post the above message on your shop's Facebook page as well.
5. Let your customers know that you realize they depend on their vehicles, which is why you're concerned about the health, safety and well-being of their vehicles as well. This is why scheduled services and repairs that are due should not be overlooked.
6. Let your customers know if you provide a vehicle pickup and delivery service.
7. If you find that business has slowed down, or you suspect that it will be due to a drop in appointments, you need to immediately implement your "Slow Day Procedure" ("Today Only" specials, calling your customers, calling customers who are scheduled for next week and encouraging them to come in today, etc.).
8. You can begin managing your labor cost by asking your employees if they'd be willing to put in less hours. You can also offer your employees the opportunity to take some of their vacation time, and as an incentive to do so, you can provide them with some additional vacation days at no charge. Lastly, in order to be fair to all, you can implement an across-the-board cut in hours and have your employees work split-shifts.
9. Cutting back on advertising is one of the last things you want to do. Let your competitors cut back, because that will give you greater exposure, and will let your customers and your community know that your business is healthy and continuing to grow.
10. Lastly, have a team meeting to review the above policies with all of your employees, and let them know that there is nothing more important to you than the safety of each and every one of them, and the safety of your customers as well.