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If you are in the auto repair business, you know just how competitive this business can be. In many cities around the United States, national repair chains go head-to-head with the local auto repair shop guys in an all-out battle to win the hearts and cars in the local community.

If you have cars, you will eventually need maintenance or repairs to them. And the United States is home to the largest passenger vehicle market of any country in the world, including cars, trucks and buses. Recent statistics show that there are approximately 250 million registered vehicles on the road today. That figure includes all types of vehicles. Approximately 16 million new vehicles are sold annually.

So with such a massive target market, itâ€™s no wonder there are thousands of auto repair businesses throughout the US. In 2009, there were 129,616 established businesses engaged in general auto repair. These firms employed 422,526 and generated $29.15 billion in revenues. That number is likely higher in 2012.

How can an auto repair business differentiate itself? Many auto repair businesses have taken to using a mix of marketing methods, like print media newspaper and TV advertising to share their businesses with local customers. Some stick to traditional marketing methods, while other auto repair shops have introduced marketing mail strategies, including using printed direct mail campaign pieces.

The Internet has opened up new methods of marketing for auto repair shops, including how-to videos on auto repair, social media usage and more. Auto repair businesses are becoming more educated in all aspects of Internet marketing, web design, geographically-targeted social and mobile marketing, and direct response couponing.

Rather than trying new means of marketing, an auto repair business needs to understand who its customers are, what they want from the business and how best to reach them. If all of your auto repair business customers have told you that they prefer sending marketing text messages to their phone, youâ€™d consider doing that, wouldnâ€™t you? Likewise, if all your customers throughout the wor week are coming from your success in using auto repair direct mail campaigns, youâ€™d consider staying the course on that!

To be a successful marketer of auto repair businesses, a mix of methods is a proven winner. Direct mail is very much balanced out with email marketing. Some new customers might receive a direct mail post card with a new offer on repairs, while a retained customer might be comfortable with seeing a similar offer in his email inbox. Finding new customers and retaining existing customers is an art and a science.

Marketing today is strategy-driven communications â€“ knowing who are your customers are, and why they remain customers, and then doing your best to retain them as customers. If an auto repair shop is successful in managing that communications relationship, they will find success in their local markets.

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