



# Why Your Customers Leave You for Another Workshop, and How You Can Stop It From Happening!



Have you noticed recently that a customer who was always in every 6 months like clockwork for their service hasn't been in for a while? The thought bugs you enough that you go and look up their service history to discover it's been more than 12 months since you last saw them.

Co-incidentally, when you are out on a test drive a few days later, you see that customers' car parked down the road in the driveway of one of your competitors. You are immediately overcome with disappointment and a little bit of anger. Why would they go there when you worked so hard to deliver them fantastic customer service? (or so you thought).

In disbelief you head back to your workshop, certain that now all of your customers are leaving you.

This might be a slight exaggeration, but the pain of realising you have lost a good customer is real, especially when you have been given no indication of why they left. As a result, you will replay your previous encounters with this customer in your mind, looking for the answers.

The reasons why you lose a customer to another workshop generally fall into 3 main categories:

1. **Misunderstanding:** Somewhere in the sales/customer service process, the customer misunderstood what the expected outcome would be, and left disappointed. You may get absolutely no indication that this has taken place, especially from customers who feel intimidated by even being in an auto repair business (think females, mums,



elderly). But this leads us to the second reason

2. **Poor communication:** Both parties can be responsible for this. You or a member of your team could have poorly described the intended process, cost, or time frame required to do the job. Even if you think you did a great job of speaking with the customer, unless you can get a guarantee that they understand and agree to suggestions and timeframes, you run the risk of an unhappy customer at the end. The customer themselves may also have not clearly communicated an issue or the time they require their car back. However, it is your/ your teams job to ask enough questions to ensure you get this right.



3. **You ripped them off or didn't fix their problem:** Or so they think. Let's face it, we all know there are dodgy workshops out there charging crazy prices, or attracting customers with low prices and doing questionable work. I'm sure you are not one of them, but from time to time though, a car could leave your workshop with something not properly tightened, and as a result your customer thinks you didn't do a good job. Oil could leak on their driveway, for instance, and without a word to you, they decide not to return.

So how can you change this and mitigate the potential loss of customers to other workshops?

The answer really comes down to implementing strategies in one major area...COMMUNICATION.



Most of the above negative situations can be overcome by thoroughly "interviewing" the customer when they arrive, by talking with them during the service, and by speaking with them again in the days after leaving. That might sound like a lot of work when you already feel like you are time poor, but it is the bare minimum required if you are to WOW the customer so that they see your value and return to you.

Here are five ways to ensure you can clearly communicate and receive feedback from your customers:

1. **At the time of booking in:** Have a standard set of questions each customer is asked when they book in over the phone or in person. Having a standardised "script" ensures you can offer the same level of customer service no matter who is delivering it – this is also your first opportunity to seed the idea of potential additional items of work.

2. **When the customer arrives:** have a dedicated service advisor/technician meet with the customer at their vehicle to discuss any issues or potential concerns. Get crystal clear here why the customer has come in, what they expect the outcome of the visit will be, and what time they require the car back.

3. **While work is in progress:** communicate with the customer if additional work needs doing, or you need more time. This is the number one area where customers become disillusioned. Don't go ahead with extra work if you don't have permission, and if you need extra time because of a parts delay or other unforeseen issue, explain it to the customer!

4. **When the customer picks up the vehicle:** Explain every line item on the invoice. Never just put it on the counter and ask for the money. This is your time to





explain the value you have added into your work... "we've washed and fragranced your car today, and added 6 months Australia wide roadside assist". Also explain that in a few days' time the customer will receive a courtesy call from you to see if they have any questions, and make sure they are happy with the job.

5. Making the follow up call: Each Wednesday, call all of the customers from the previous week and ask how they found your service. Ask if they have any questions or concerns. If everything is great, great! If they have a concern (a strange noise, smell, or leaking fluid) this is your opportunity to either put the customer at ease over the phone, or ask them to come in so that you can inspect the vehicle. When you don't make these calls, and the customer has an issue with

the work you have done, first they will tell their friends and family (generating bad word of mouth), and then they will go to one of your competitors. Don't be fooled into thinking each unhappy customer will let you know of their unhappiness... Most won't.

Even if you discover you have lost a customer to another workshop, it is possible to win them back. Call them! Ask them if there was an issue that led to them leaving you. If nothing else, you will learn about an issue didn't know you had, and you might be able to fix it before you lose others. Imagine if you had a team member who was putting your customers off, and unless you rang and asked your customers why they left, it continued. Calling lost customers could stop thousands of dollars in repeat business from leaving your

workshop.

If your communication processes aren't up to scratch, get to work immediately. It's really important that you keep your customers right where they need to be... with you!

Rachael Sheldrick is a workshop owner and Australia's leading business mentor for self-employed mechanics. For help with workshop



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productivity, leading your team, cash flow, systemisation, social media, and marketing, visit www.workshopwhisperer.com or call Rachael on 0425800295.

# CTEK THE MOST ADVANCED POWER SOLUTION

CTEK, a leading global brand in the care and maintenance of vehicle batteries, has launched the PRO60 - an innovative, versatile and highly efficient 60A battery charger and power supply, designed around the needs of the modern workshop.



including lithium (LiFePO4). The PRO60's unique patent applied for Adaptive Charging mode automatically recognises the size of the battery and selects the optimum charging settings for the fastest charge - making operation quicker and easier than ever.

The PRO60 is the perfect power supply for diagnostic or software flashing work, procedures that require the vehicle's ignition to be switched on for long periods of time. Providing up to 60A of clean and constant current, the PRO60 has a variable yet extremely stable output, offering total flexibility for the user with 12.6V to 14.8V available, selectable in 0.1V increments. Due to its inherently low voltage ripple, low current ripple and a range of integrated safety features, the PRO60 is safe for the battery and the vehicle's delicate electronic systems.

It has a simple user interface with just four buttons and a clear LCD display. Its radical design allows for convection cooling through a central cooling core, which eliminates the need for cooling fans and improves operating efficiency and reliability. Unique 'Resonant Converter' transformer technology delivers high levels of current with high efficiency and stability even at high ambient temperatures.

The PRO60 is designed for use in even the toughest workshop environment and is built to last. It is supplied with 5m cables and heavy-duty clamps, and its rugged impact-resistant polycarbonate casing incorporates a folding carrying handle, making it highly portable. Mounting points are designed in to the casing and a wall mount and trolley are available as optional accessories.

CTEK research claims that around 1 in 4 vehicles are entering the workshop with an undercharged battery and that premature battery failure during service or diagnostic work is becoming increasingly common - not good for the workshop in terms of both productivity and profit. With the PRO60 these problems can be avoided.

The PRO60 restores, charges and reconditions the battery using a patented multi-step charging process. It's compatible with all types of 12V battery,

The unit is designed to be user friendly,

See CTEK at the Expo, or for more information about the PRO60 visit [www.ctek.com](http://www.ctek.com)

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